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A WIFE'S WELCOME.

BY R. L.

At last thou art come, and I once thought to tell thee,
How I mourned in thine absence and longed for thy voice:
How I thought of thee, looked for thee, prayed for thy coming,
Yet now thou art here I can only rejoice.

When the bright sun is hidden by dark clouds o'erhanging,
All Nature seems mournful and weeps at the sight;
But when they are passed she resumes all her gladness,
And, forgetting his absence, she smiles with delight.

It is thus with my heart. All my sorrow forgotten,
The memory has fled with the cause of my pain;
I think not, I speak not of aught save the present,
And rejoice that at last thou art with me again.

A LOCK OF HAIR.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

THE spring season was nearly over at Eastcliffe, and Trickett's Boarding House almost empty, the vicitors having left, with the exception of a few who had no home attractions awaiting them.

Among those remaining were Mr. and Mrs. Enson, an ordinary young couple, well provided with the good things of this life, of which they had a thorough appreciation; Lucy Starr, a frank, unaffected, clever girl, with an unusual power of discerning character, and a habit of speaking her mind plainly and strongly; the only little spice of self-conceit in her nature being her consciousness of the talent she really possessed of character-reading—no human counterfeit need hope to escape her penetrating eye and rather severe animadversions.

She was completely unselfish and a staunch friend, and at this time was on a visit to Mrs. Enson, an old schoolmate. Another visitor who was still staying at the boarding-house was Miss Hunt, a nervous, shy, very plain, deaf woman of about fifty, and the last, Mr. Edgar Richmond, a dashing, handsome, dark-moustached young man of thirty, who enjoyed the utmost popularity.

He had been the life and soul of the boarding house all the season, and had made hosts of friends—the Ensons being prominent among these; the secret of his success was that he was always in a good temper, and had a happy knack of appearing kind and thoughtful for the comfort of others.

This thoughtfulness however was more apparent than real, though none of the boarders, with one exception, ever thought of questioning his good intentions.

A habit of his which delighted people was a way he had of appearing to think the most ordinary observations strikingly clever and sharp; it is doubtful whether he would have understood a really witty remark, or seen anything to applaud in it—for instance, a lady would say, "I'll take my umbrella out with me, then we shall be certain to have no rain."

Richmond at once would break out in his sweet musical laugh, repeating with an appearance of the most intense enjoyment, "That's really capital! 'I'll take my umbrella out, and then there will be no rain.' I say, really, you know, that's awfully good—'my umbrella out, no rain!'" etcætera; or, again, some one would remark that pouring cats and dogs did not adequately describe the rain that had fallen in the night.

This not very original observation would convulse Mr. Richmond for a few minutes; and, when he could speak, he would be heard murmuring, "Cats and dogs didn't describe it. Awfully funny idea, really—cats and dogs!"—and so on. By this means, he put all his acquaintances on good terms with themselves—an infallible method of securing a popular position. He openly confessed that he was looking out for a rich wife; but people did not think the worse of him on that account; they only regretted he had not enough of his own to enable him to follow the dictates of his own kind heart.

"I must have money when I marry," he said to the Ensons almost immediately he made their acquaintance. "I have, on an average, a thousand a year, which I derive from several small vineyards in France and Italy; but what's that to a fellow who is fond of horses? Really nothing!"

He always took care that this should be distinctly understood whenever he made new friends, especially when, as in the case of the Ensons, any unmarried ladies were of the party.

He was not a flirt; and, having a superlative notion of his own irresistible qualities, he thought it only fair to the unmoneyed young ladies that his intentions should be plainly understood. As to his unselfish good-nature, take the following instance:

During his stay, a young fellow of seventeen, sent along by his parents to Trickett's met with an accident, and sprained his ankle so severely that he was unable to move off the sofa for nearly a week. His only resource, in those circumstances, was chess. Richmond happened to be the one other chess-player staying in the house. The first day young Grant was laid up, there was an incessant downpour of rain, making it almost impossible to stir out.

Here was an opportunity not to be neglected of playing the Good Samarijan, and amusing himself at the same time. With tender solicitude, Richmond devoted himself to Grant, and earned his everlasting gratitude.

It was not noticed that the next five days the young fellow lay there, weary and dull, were fine, and consequently Richmond could find better entertainment elsewhere. Then, again, a very rich exclusive couple were staying at Trickett's, with two most unpleasant children. Richmond made up his mind, before the season was over, that he would get an invitation to their country-house; and to attain this end, he paid most assiduous court to the children—took them out for walks and presented them with stores of toys. Every one thought how kind it was of him.

"Poor little beggars!" he would say. "None of you seem to care for them."

The parents, who doted on their spoilt children, were easily won by this; and before they left, Richmond was their invited guest. It did not occur to any one as being singular that, directly the parents had gone, the children, who stayed on a week or two with the governess, had no more of Richmond's attention.

The one person in the house who was not favorably impressed by Edgar Richmond was Lucy Starr. She declared his imperturbable good-temper was due, in a great measure, to the absence in him of proper pride.

"He does not care what any one says or thinks of him," she urged in support of this theory in a conversation with Mrs. Enson. "Through mixing in society he has acquired a certain amount of tact; but his good breeding is most superficial, and his sentiments are frequently vulgar in tone, though he does not murder the Queen's English in giving them expression. Everything about him is flippant and shallow; and this is combined with an intense self-appreciation this is most annoying. Altogether, he is the most egotistical, conceited man I have ever met!"

"Ah, Lucy, I don't see how even you can call him conceited!" replied Mrs. Enson. "Though you appear to think poor Edgar Richmond the embodiment of all the vices, you should be just to him; I never saw a man so alive to his own shortcomings; he is always talking about them."

"This is one of my principal reasons for considering his conceit; he thinks his miserable little weaknesses more interesting that the noble deeds of others. What particularly irritates me is his habit of crediting the whole world with every one of his own failings, reserving for himself alone the great virtues of truth and candor; and so inferring that, instead of being worse, he is very much better than mankind in general."

"You can always beat me at argument, Lucy; but you need not think you have convinced me on that account; and, at any rate, you must allow he is good tempered, for you say the most outrageously rude things to him sometimes, and he bears it like a lamb."

"I do not respect him for it; I should think far better of him if he turned round on me occasionally, when I tell him unpleasant truths."

"Well, if you are sufficiently unreasonable to object to a man because he is too gentlemanly to contradict or argue with a lady, there is an end of all further discussion, though I must say you do him great injustice. Of course nobody can be perfect; we all have our little faults, and I am sure his are all on the surface. Willie thinks, and I agree with him, that Edgar Richmond will settle down into a capital husband when he marries. I only wish you had more money."

"Why, you don't suppose that I would have him?" cried Lucy indignantly. "Not if he were a millionnaire! You surely must know I detest him."

"You certainly say so often enough," replied Mrs. Enson, laughing. "Now don't look daggers at me—I believe you; but you might have felt very differently if he had seemed to admire you more; and even now, Willie thinks you like him much better than you care to admit. He says these violent and unreasonable expressions of dislike are often adopted to conceal the real state of people's feelings, especially in cases where the person may be slightly disappointed. So I should keep my sentiments a little more to myself if I were you, or you may be misunderstood; for, you know, it really is hard to believe you object to him as much as you say; he is a man almost any girl would be glad to marry."

Lucy's outspoken criticisms annoyed her easy-going friend, who did not wish to appear wanting in discrimination, so occasionally she liked to have a little dig at her.

"I think it is shameful of your husband to insinuate such untrue things; I'll never mention Richmond's name again!" cried Lucy, boiling over with wrath and flouncing out of the door.

Mrs. Enson was not deceived by this threat however; Edgar Richmond's character was a most interesting study to Lucy, and very little encouragement would always start her on the subject.

Miss Hunt, on the other hand, had made herself as unpopular as Richmond had become popular; and, again, for purely social reasons. In this case also Lucy took a singular stand, for she declared Miss Hunt was by no means disagreeable "when you knew her a little," and had many really noble qualities; but she admitted she was a most difficult person to fathom.

Her liking for Miss Hunt originated to some extent in a feeling of pity, for hers was a history calculated to arouse the sympathies of a warm-hearted girl; and little by little, she had admitted Lucy to her confidence, having taken a great liking to her.

To the rest of the boarders she had been cold and distant, almost to a repulsive degree. She made a slight exception however in the case of Edgar Richmond; he had been only moderately polite to her, and used to ridicule her peculiarities almost before her face in a low tone; but she had experienced so little attention from gentleman that very small courtesies assumed in her eyes much more important proportions.

Her father had been a wealthy merchant, with a family of handsome daughters, she being the one exception. She was the eldest, and had been a very beautiful child; but, at the age of twelve, had had an attack of small-pox which had entirely destroyed her beauty and rendered her very deaf.

From this time she was almost completely overlooked and neglected by her very worldly-minded parents. She was sent to an inferior school, and came away at sixteen, having made no friends and with no accomplishments to speak of.

Her affliction and the cold treatment of her family had soured her naturally amiable temper, and teachers and pupils found it so difficult to penetrate her barrier of reserve that at last they gave it up in despair, and left her to herself. Probably, had she been a pretty girl, things would have been very different.

When she returned home, the same cruel system was carried on. As they all grew up, her sisters went constantly into society; but she was never taken with the others, and even at their own balls and parties did not appear.

Ultimately her parents were punished for their unnatural conduct; for an epidemic carried off three of her beautiful sisters, and the other died of consumption shortly after. Her father, broken-hearted, retired from business, and bought an estate in the country where he spent the remainder of his days, with the miserable wife and only daughter.

There they lived a most unhappy unloving life for fifteen years, showing no hospitality and refusing all invitations. At the end of that time her father died suddenly, and her mother within a month of him, leaving Miss Hunt very rich, but with no friends, except among her servants and the cottagers on the estate, by whom she was much esteemed and commiserated.

For many months she remained alone in the desolate house; but at last a new clergyman came to the place, and his wife, feeling for her lonely position, determined to make her acquaintance, in spite of all opposition. So she called, under pretext of asking for subscriptions for one of her charities. Miss Hunt received her very coldly; but she, good soul, would not be repulsed, but felt it a duty to come again and again, until she succeeded in persuading her to emerge from her retirement and try to interest herself in the outer world.

She often thought, in after years, how differently she would have acted, could she have had a glimpse of the future. Far better for the poor woman to have lived and died in her gloomy house.

It must have been a hard struggle to the deaf, middle-aged, self-contained woman to emerge from her seclusion; but she made the effort; and for the last six or seven years had been travelling about with a maid-servant in the vain search of amusement and pleasure.

She was charitable, and gave away a good deal of money; but her manner did not endear her to the recipients, so that her good deeds were seldom spoken of with gratitude, and people were quite unaware of the amount she thus spent. For this reason nobody supposed her to be nearly as rich as she was, for she dressed very plainly

indeed shabbily.

It was a great surprise therefore to Lucy to hear, during one of their conversations together, that Miss Hunt's income amounted to close upon ten thousand pounds a year, and was entirely at her own disposal.

Going into the general sitting-room immediately after, Lucy found Mrs. Enson alone there, as she supposed; and, enjoining secrecy on her—Miss Hunt having said she did not wish her wealth to become a topic of conversation—she told her what she had just learnt.

Mrs. Enson was loud in her astonishment, and during this, Mr. Richmond appeared from behind the curtains in the bay-window, and, saying unblushingly—"I could not find it in my heart to interrupt you, Miss Starr. Thank you for a most interesting piece of news"—left the room.

"What a disgraceful thing!" cried Lucy angrily. "The man has actually been listening. He is the meanest creature I've ever seen."

"My dear, I don't suppose he heard half of what you said. I have no doubt he was asleep when you came in. I've been here for ten minutes, and he has never once moved."

"Well, I'll never say anything else I don't want him to hear, without first looking under the tables and sofas to see if he is playing the spy."

The next general assembly of the occupants of the house was at the half-past seven o'clock dinner. The dining-table presented rather a mournful appearance; it was very large, capable of accommodating at least twenty visitors, and was not reducible.

Those that remained still retained the seats they had occupied during the season; and in many cases there was a gap of two or three chairs between the diners.

Miss Hunt was one of these isolated ones, having three chairs on her right, and one on her left vacant. The Ensons, Lucy and Mr. Richmond were together at the other end, and on the opposite side of the table.

Sometimes Lucy gave up her chair, and went and sat by Miss Hunt; but at last she desisted, as her doing so only seemed to confuse and worry the nervous woman, who latterly had eaten her dinner quite unnoticed, and in complete silence.

It was a matter of astonishment therefore to every one, when, on this particular evening, directly they went into the dining-room, Mr. Richmond, smiling in his most winning manner the while, said to Miss Hunt—

"I should like to come and sit by you to-night, if you will allow me."

"Oh, certainly," she said nervously, and blushing high with pleasure; "but I am afraid it will be rather dull for you. You see I am so much divided from the rest of the table."

"That is the very reason I am coming," he replied, laughing. "That long gap does make the table look so uncomfortable; I have been thinking so for the last week; now I cannot stand it any longer. Don't look tragic at me, Miss Starr," he continued, "for deserting your party. If we can't talk together at this distance quite so comfortably, we can look at each other more, which is something."

Certainly Lucy Starr's expression did call for some remark; it was perfectly unconscious, as all her expressions were; but it would be difficult to imagine a pretty face more full of angry contempt. Recalled to herself in this unpleasant manner, she grew crimson, and had not a word to say.

Everybody laughed, Mr. Richmond gaily leading the chorus. All dinner-time he devoted himself to his uninteresting companion, and, his good humor being so infectious, at last he succeeded in making her laugh heartily. Poor thing, she had never before felt so light-hearted.

Once only they came to a standstill. Mr. Richmond made a remark which Miss Hunt could not hear. She asked him to repeat it; he did so in a louder key; still she could not catch his meaning, and became quite flustered and unhappy.

"I'm afraid I'm dreadfully disagreeable to talk to. Do go back to your friends. I cannot understand what you say."

"No, nor anybody else," thought Lucy indignantly.

This was one of Mr. Richmond's jokes. He had been talking a sort of heathenish gibberish, in order to provide amusement for the rest of the table at his companion's expense. Every one smiled, though several thought it was a little too bad.

Mr. Richmond hastened to reassure his companion, and declared he had not enjoyed a dinner and conversation so much for weeks.

She really must not mind asking him to repeat what she did not catch, as he knew he spoke very indistinctly; he had often been told so by a dear friend of his who was slightly deaf; in fact, he had great difficulty in making her hear anything, whereas others had no trouble whatever in doing so.

"It's quite a standing joke now," he said airily. "Kate and I often laugh about it." Then he added quietly, "Not strictly true, but balm to the afflicted soul."

"Oh, I think you speak very distinctly," said Miss Hunt, earnestly, "only that once I failed to hear what you said."

After dinner Miss Hunt went at once to her room, looking strangely happier and brighter, and Richmond lounged into the drawing-room, where were the Ensons and Lucy.

"Enson, come and have a stroll and a cigar for half an hour, there's a good fellow. I feel quite hoarse and worn out. Miss Starr can you tell me a good maker of ear trumpets? I am afraid I shall have to recommend one to our interesting friend in a day or two."

Lucy, thrilling with anger, replied impulsively—

"If I could get poor Miss Hunt a pair of spectacles to enable her to see character more plainly, I would be only too delighted to do so."

"Ah, I suppose that is some sort of a dig at me! I don't understand it, but no doubt it is. Don't be so severe on one of your admirers, Miss Starr; it really is too bad. Come on, Enson. Au revoir, ladies. We shall not be long: I am coming back to teach the Hunt bezique. I shall go and get some voice lozenges now."

With this he left the room, laughing gaily.

The two men returned in a short time, and the lessons in bezique lasted until it was time for the ladies to retire.

Lucy went into Mrs. Enson's room for a few minutes' chat—an invariable custom—and broke out with—

"Now what do you think of your favorite?"

"I think he is wonderfully good-natured trying to amuse that poor stupid old woman."

"Doesn't it strike you as being rather strange that his kindness should only have developed since our conversation of this afternoon?"

"I don't see anything peculiar about it; everything must have a beginning. I am sure he acted with the most good-natured intention. Certainly it was a little too bad of him talking that nonsense to her; but people with such very high spirits do occasionally go rather too far, without meaning to be unkind. And then she is such a disagreeable old thing that I was not at all sorry."

"Well, you are evidently quite blind on the subject of Mr. Richmond. I only hope your eyes will not be opened too suddenly. I'd better say 'good-night' now, for I feel too cross to speak pleasantly."

With that Lucy left the room and proceeded to her own. She had to pass Miss Hunt's on the way.

Usually all was quiet and dark, but to-night Miss Hunt was standing on the threshold waiting for her to pass, and, to her astonishment, invited her to come in for a few minutes.

"I feel so wakeful to-night, my dear, I am sure I shall not sleep, and yet I am not unwell. Will you come in for a little while? I want to ask your advice."

"If I can be of any service to you, Miss Hunt, I shall only be too glad," replied Lucy cordially.

"Well, the fact is," she said, hesitating and looking confused, "I have been thinking for some weeks past that I must replenish my wardrobe. I do not like being so very unfashionable; and I thought perhaps you would be so kind as to come with me to choose some new things."

"Oh, certainly," agreed Lucy with an inward start. "But don't you think it would be better to wait a few weeks until we return to London? The season is almost over here, and the shops are decidedly not so good?"

Miss Hunt's sensitive nature at once shrank back at this slight rebuff; and, looking cold and hurt, she replied—

"Oh, my dear, if it's any trouble to come, of course I can manage by myself! It was thoughtless of me to propose such an uninteresting task to you."

Lucy, who was genuinely sorry to have clouded her brightness, hastened to declare it would not be the slightest trouble, but a pleasure; and before she said good-night it was arranged that the next day they would commence their shopping expedition.

Miss Hunt pressed her hand warmly, and kissed her for the first time; and Lucy pursued her way, looking very grave and shaking her head.

CHAPTER II.

THE following day the same rule with regard to seats was observed; Miss Hunt evidently enjoyed her breakfast, and started off with Lucy immediately afterwards in high spirits, declining Mr. Richmond's escort, blushing and laughing the while.

"Some other day we shall be only too pleased if you will take us for a walk, shall we not, Miss Starr?"

Lucy did not feel bound to reply, so maintained a glum silence. Mr. Richmond laughed, and said he knew Miss Starr preferred tete-a-tete walks, which sent her out in an irritable frame of mind. They lunched at a confectioner's, and came back to tea thoroughly tired out. They had had great difficulty in getting what they wanted, as any delay in sending the things home seemed to Miss Hunt to be an insurmountable objection.

"Surely, if the gown is sent in a few days, it will do; there is no desperate hurry, is there?" said Lucy, on one occasion. But Miss Hunt would not hear of it, saying she could not wear her old dress another day.

"I do not care what I pay; I must have the things at once."

As there is very little that money cannot accomplish, at last they managed to get one or two dresses and bonnets, which the people promised should be sent home the same evening.

"Not in time for dinner, I am sorry to say, my dear. I shall look quite an object in that shaggy old thing; at any rate, I could get a nice piece of lace."

"But, dear Miss Hunt," urged Lucy, "you have worn the same dress for three months. I won't say I think it is becoming; but still one day more or less cannot signify."

"I think differently," rejoined Miss Hunt abruptly.

Lucy discontinued her remonstrances, and, when they had driven for some distance in silence, remarked—

"By-the-bye, there is one thing we have quite forgotten; you want a new headdress."

"I think I shall leave that for the present, my dear. I shall see how I look without a cap. You know I am not bound to wear one at all."

"But I should think you would be very uncomfortable after having been used to them so long."

"I don't at all see why I should; lots of people don't wear caps at my age, and I have plenty of hair."

Lucy said nothing; but, like the proverbial parrot, thought the more.

At dinner-time Miss Hunt came down without her cap, having done her best to brighten up her dress.

There was a little hum of amused astonishment, but she did not perceive it; and, when Richmond, his face full of respectful admiration, darted forward and offered his arm, she took it and swept into the dining-room proudly and happily.

After dinner, being tired, she retired to her room, and the others sat in the drawing-room and talked as was their wont. Mr. Enson chaffed Richmond about his attentions to Miss Hunt.

"I say, my boy, don't turn the poor old lady's head."

"What a queer old thing she is!" exclaimed Richmond, laughing pleasantly. "Fancy her believing me when I complimented her on her appearance without her cap, and said the only improvement I could suggest was that she should wear a few curls on her forehead. She means to do so, I believe; and, being able to keep my countenance under any provocation, I quite look forward to seeing her to-morrow."

"You ought to be ashamed of making a butt of an inoffensive afflicted woman. She may be eccentric and easily imposed upon; but she is much too good to be turned into ridicule!" interposed Lucy, warmly.

"I am bound to say I cannot see anything good about her. You should have heard old Rogers at the library talking about her. I shouted with laughter. The fellow is a wonderful mimic."

"He is an ungrateful old wretch, if he has been saying anything disrespectful of Miss Hunt. I happen to know that, but for her, he might have been ruined this spring. She is one of the most generous as well as one of the most unselfish of women."

"Ah, well, you know I am a peculiar kind of fellow! I do not believe in the feeling of gratitude ever existing. I know I detest being under an obligation to any one. If a fellow saved my life, it would worry me to death to be expected to be grateful; I am sure I should hate him. And, as for unselfishness, I quite admit I am dreadfully selfish; but then I believe all people are, only they won't allow it. But I like my friends to know the worst of me; then they won't be disappointed."

"But don't you find letting every one know the worst of you rather interferes with you making friends? I never feel that my best entitles me to any particular estimation."

"No, I have never found it so," he rejoined; "but then, you know, I believe that really and truly we are all alike; only there are not many so candid as I am."

Feeling utterly disgusted, and finding him started on his favorite hobby, Lucy, shortly afterwards, escaped from the room and retired to rest.

For a few days nothing eventful occurred; but Mrs. Enson began to have her suspicions aroused; and one evening, when chatting with Lucy, she said in a most mysterious tone—

"Do you know, Lucy, I believe I saw Edgar Richmond take Miss Hunt's hand and press it during their game at cards; I am sure I was not mistaken, though she did not seem in the least surprised—only pleased. And then I think he glances at her in a very strange way; don't you?"

"His looks seem to me perfectly consistent with his behavior. I know they go out for a walk every day."

"Well, I do not think it is right. I shall ask Willie to remonstrate with him. Of course he means nothing but fun and good-nature; but I am sure poor old Miss Hunt is foolish enough to be completely taken in."

"I am not so sure he means nothing," said Lucy, sagaciously shaking her head. "Remember, she has ten thousand a year!"

"Lucy," said Mrs. Enson, reproachfully, "how can you say such things? A young, handsome, gentlemanly man like Richmond, to think of a hideous deaf old woman! Why, it would be monstrous! I do not believe a word it, an I shall certainly get Willie to warn him how open his conduct is to misinterpretation."

Lucy therefore was the only member of the household who was not electrified when the bombshell fell and exploded, and it was known that Mr. Richmond had proposed to, and been accepted by Miss Hunt.

It came out in this way: Lucy had gone into Miss Hunt's room to wish her good-night, as was her usual custom; they had not met during the evening, for she had been with the Ensons to a concert; they expected that Richmond would have accompanied them, as he had secured his seat some time before; but at the last moment he had cried off, saying he preferred his quiet game of bezique. She found Miss Hunt in a strangely excited and emotional condition.

"Shut the door, my dear," she exclaimed. "I have been longing to see you for the last hour. Ah, child, I am so happy! I want to confide it all to you."

"What is it?" asked Lucy, her heart misgiving her. "Tell me. You may be sure I will keep your secret faithfully."

"It is no secret," rejoined Miss Hunt proudly; "I should like all the world to know it, as they will soon. Edgar has asked me to be his wife."

"But you surely have not accepted him?" asked Lucy anxiously.

"Not accepted him?" reiterated Miss Hunt in astonishment. "Would any woman have refused him?"

"Ah, but consider, dear friend—consider," pleaded Lucy, "how little you know of him! Three months ago you were unaware of his very existence; is it safe to trust your future to such a stranger? You are so good and kind; there may be many happy years before you; don't risk your whole life. I have no faith in Mr. Richmond—ah, don't interrupt me; let me speak to you! You think I am prejudiced; but why should I be, unless there is something in him to inspire distrust? I am quite sure he is not a good man. I cannot hope that you will be influenced by my advice; but let me implore you to consult some one in whose judgment you have confidence—that good clergyman's wife you told me of—before you give a final answer."

"My answer is given. Lucy, you pain me very much; you are entirely mistaken in your estimate of Mr. Richmond; I believe him to be good and sincere. I hoped you would rejoice in my happiness—Heaven knows I have not had much in my life; and I am greatly disappointed! Why should I doubt the truth of Edgar's love? Many men have married women older than themselves and been happy; so shall we be. How thankful I am nobody can accuse him of mercenary motives! You are the only soul here who knows I am rich."

Lucy started back with a little cry of dismay. In a moment the harm she had quite unconsciously worked, flashed upon her; but for her impulsive communicativeness Richmond would never have suspected Miss Hunt's wealth, and she would have been safe from any sinister designs on his part; she felt that she was to blame for it all.

Poor Lucy had often spoken hastily and regretted it afterwards; but never before had she experienced the same overwhelming sensation of responsibility.

"Oh, why," she thought, "am I not more careful? It would have been a joy to me to have made her life happier, and now what mischief I have wrought! I shall never forgive myself. I wish she had impressed more on me that I was to mention it to no one; but I suppose she trusted me implicitly, poor thing, and I have betrayed her."

"Lucy, what is the matter?" inquired Miss Hunt, noticing her agitation. "You surely respected my confidence?"

"Oh, Miss Hunt, how can I tell you? You cannot reproach me more bitterly than I reproach myself; but I should grieve to lose your friendship, for I could love you dearly if you would let me. I must say something that will give you great pain. Promise you will forgive me for the mischief I have done."

"Child, you frighten me; but don't hesitate to speak plainly—you, at least, need not fear me; and I am too happy to be harsh with any one to-night."

Lucy felt an extra pang at this, but struggled bravely, and continued—

"Then I must tell you. Mr. Richmond knows you have ten thousand pounds a year; he overheard me telling Mrs. Enson so in confidence. I did not understand it was to be such a profound secret. I can never sufficiently regret my thoughtlessness, now I see what it has led to!" Lucy was sobbing in a most contrite spirit.

Miss Hunt looked grave and a degree paler, and waited a minute, watching the weeping girl; then she said—

"My dear, you certainly did wrong to mention that I told you; but you need not feel it so deeply; you have done no real harm. I am a little disappointed that I shall not have the pleasure of telling Edgar when we are married that we are rich; but it would be hard if I could not forgive you—the truest friend I have ever had, I believe—such a slight mistake as that. Ah, you have thought me cold and reserved! You little knew how your attentive consideration soothed the poor lonely woman; you first taught me that I had a heart."

There were tears in her eyes, and she held out her arms lovingly to Lucy.

"Don't—don't speak so kindly to me! How can you say I have done no real harm? You see now his motives are no longer above suspicion."

"Hush, Lucy!" interrupted Miss Hunt, in a voice tremulous with suppressed excitement. "Never dare to say such a thing again! I wish to remain your friend; but I will never speak to you again if this is not the last insinuation of the kind I hear from you. It is too, too cruel," she went on, getting painfully excited, "to suggest an idea to me! I have had so little love in my hard life, and, now it has come, you want to rob me of my happiness. And how should you be as good a judge of Edgar's character as I am?" she continued more calmly. "I am older and more experienced. We have certainly known him the same length of time; but he has shown his heart to me, and I know him to be good and true. It matters not to me what others may think of him, and I am sure he loves me."

Her plain face quite lighted up, and looked sweet and womanly in these new circumstances, and her voice had in it a

tender ring which Lucy had never heard before.

"May Heaven forgive me if I am wrong!" she thought. "But I have not the moral courage to dispel her illusion. I cannot tell her of his cruel jokes at her expense. Nothing else would open her eyes, and I believe it would break her heart. I must let events take their course."

"Now, dear, promise me you will never allude to this conversation, and wish me happiness before we say good night."

"With all my heart I pray that you may be happy. I will never say another word to vex you. Good night, and Heaven bless you!"

They kissed lovingly and parted. Lucy pondered deeply for many hours that night; and, ere she slept, registered a vow to do her utmost to avert danger and trouble from the unsuspecting woman she had so innocently wronged.

CHAPTER III.

THE next morning Lucy found that the news had spread throughout their little community. Richmond had told Mr. Enson, and then gone out for a long walk, that the excitement might cool down a little before he returned.

Miss Hunt breakfasted in her own room for somewhat the same reason; so there was no hindrance to the chorus of indignant surprise as the news became general property.

"I never heard anything so disgraceful!" declared Mrs. Enson, who seemed to feel personally aggrieved at the turn events had taken. "I can hardly believe it now. I shall never care to speak to Edgar Richmond again; and, as for her, she is worse than he. Are you not disgusted, Lucy?"

"I am very sorry," replied Lucy; "but I shall certainly not give up Miss Hunt's friendship on that account."

She was the first to encounter Edgar on his return, and was very glad there was no one present when they met.

"Well, Miss Starr," he began, with malicious glee, "wish me joy. I can see you have heard the news. I know how pleased you must be."

Lucy tried hard to keep her temper, and replied—

"I am glad to have this opportunity of speaking to you, Mr. Richmond. You would not believe me if I told you I was not sorry to hear of Miss Hunt's engagement. I was sincerely grieved, because I cannot think that you and she are suited to each other; but still I know it is no affair of mine. We have not been very good friends, have we? But, as you are going to marry one for whom I have a great affection, I should like to bury the hatchet, if you will agree."

This speech was not spoken in Lucy's usual candid manner, it having been carefully prepared for the occasion. She felt sure Edgar would wish to interrupt her friendship with Miss Hunt, and thought it wiser to adopt a conciliatory tone.

Richmond was evidently quite nonplussed by this proposal, and for once was at a loss for an answer.

"I am glad to hear you speak in this way," he said, after a moment's reflection —"it makes things so much more pleasant, and dear Sarah is very fond of you."

A couple of days afterwards he left Eastcliffe to transact some important country business, and returned at the end of a week. The business proved to be the purchase of a house. He was telling the Ensons—who had treated him very distantly since his engagement—all about it one morning when Lucy joined them.

"It's a charming place," he said. "I have wanted to buy it for a long time; but Fernhurst was too big for a bachelor, and I was afraid too it would be quite beyond my means. The rooms and grounds are delightful, and the scenery around is splendid! I've been an awfully lucky fellow to get it."

"I suppose you gave a heavy price for it?" remarked Mr. Enson.

"No; that's just the beauty of it; it was wonderfully cheap!"

"Then there must be something wrong about it," said Enson.

"Not a bit of it. I'll take you all into the secret, provided you will promise not to tell Sarah—Miss Hunt, I mean."

"But perhaps it is something she might like to know," objected Lucy, rather curious at the same time.

"I assure you there is not the slightest reason why she should be told the circumstance; it would be better, in fact, that she should not. I am certain you will agree with me on this point. Now will you promise?" Ever one complying, he continued—"You must know I was rather in a fix about a house. I am not rich, and at the same time I did not wish to take my wife to some miserable poky little hole. I knew this place had been advertised to be sold at a reasonable figure, and I thought there would be no harm in going down and making inquiries. I must allow I was astonished at the price they asked, and at once thought, as you did, Enson, that there must be something wrong. At last the reason came out. What do you think it was? Most absurd, really! I could not help laughing at the man. Fernhurst has the credit of being haunted! No one has ever seen or heard anything, as far as I can make out; but still it has stood empty for years. The agent thinks the report was first circulated in consequence of a gang of smugglers using the cellars many years ago to conceal contraband goods in, the house being within a very short distance of the sea-shore. I am not in the very least superstitious, so I settled with the fellow at once; but I don't want to tell Sarah about it, as it might make her nervous. I hope you will not object to staying at a haunted house, Miss Lucy?" he added gaily.

"In some cases I should, but not in this; it seems absurd, from what you say, when there is such a reasonable explanation of anything mysterious—beside I do not believe in ghosts a bit."

A few days after this the whole party broke up, the Ensons and Lucy going to their respective homes, Miss Hunt to her country estate to make arrangements for her approaching marriage, which was to take place very shortly, and Edgar Richmond to the new house to superintend alterations and furnishing

Lucy took a very loving leave of her friend, and it was arranged that directly they returned from their wedding-tour she was to go to Fernhurst to stay for an indefinite period. The marriage was to be a very quiet one, in the neighbourhood of Miss Hunt's estate. Nobody knew the exact date, and it was from the newspaper announcement that Lucy learned that it had actually taken place; up to the last she had indulged in a vain hope that something might happen to prevent it.

Some weeks later she received the following letter—

"Dearest Lucy.—We shall be at Fernhurst in a week. We are enjoying ourselves greatly; but Edgar seems very anxious to settle down quietly in our home. I will not tell you any news now, except that I am very, very happy; but will reserve it all until we meet. We arrive at Fernhurst on Wednesday, the 15th inst.; in a fortnight from then I hope you will join us. I am wonderfully well in health, and am delighted to tell you am much less deaf. I consulted Doctor Merion, in Paris, and he has done wonders for me. My dear husband is kindness personified. He sends best regards to you. Good-bye, dear friend. Ever yours lovingly,

SARAH RICHMOND."

In three weeks, in answer to a further invitation, Lucy started for Fernhurst. Little did she think that with this journey the most eventful chapter of her life had commenced. She was met at the station by Edgar, who was driving a splendid pair of roans.

"I daresay you are surprised not to see Sarah," he said, after welcoming her warmly; "but she is not very well this afternoon."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Lucy. "She wrote me she felt wonderfully better for the change."

"And so she was until we came here."

"I hope you don't think it is anything serious?" inquired Lucy.

"No, indeed, I trust not," he replied earnestly. "I think it is probable that the air here is a little too strong after the mild climate we have been in for the last few weeks. However if she does not get better in a short time, I shall consult a doctor, and if he says the place disagrees with her, we must move. It will be a pity to have to do so, as I am sure you will agree with me that the house is delightfully comfortable and cheerful; but of course her health is the most important consideration. I don't want to look at things gloomily though, and I hope and believe that in a few weeks, especially now you have come, she will be all right again."

He spoke with so much feeling, and so different from his usual flippant style, that Lucy was quite surprised, and wondered whether it was possible she had been doing him an injustice. Certainly marriage seemed to have improved him wonderfully.

They had a pleasant drive, and Lucy delighted her companion with her genuine admiration of his roans.

"Yes, they are beautiful creatures, are they not? I cannot tell you what a pleasure they are to me. I am desperately fond of horses, but I have never been able to indulge my hobby for the want of means; now I have a stable full, thanks to dear Sarah's generosity. Here we are at last," he added brightly. "Welcome to Fernhurst."

Lucy uttered an exclamation of pleasure at the first sight of the house. It was not particularly large, but it was very picturesque.

The front was almost completely covered by bright-looking ivy and creepers, and each window was ablaze with flowers, the whole presenting the appearance of an enormous bouquet.

"What a delightful place," cried Lucy impulsively. "It is quite a flower bower. I cannot imagine any one feeling dull here."

"I am glad to hear you say so," replied Edgar, helping her down from the phæton. "Come in through the conservatory; we shall find Sarah in her particular snuggery, I expect. Let us give her a pleasant surprise."

After passing through the conservatory and a pretty bright hall, they came to a door which Richmond opened gently. For the first minute Lucy was dazzled by the sudden change from strong sunlight to what seemed to her to be complete darkness.

"Why, my dear," said Edgar, cheerfully, his eyes evidently more accustomed to these quick transitions, "you are in darkness here!"

"Yes," replied a weary voice; "my head ached so, I was glad to get in here out of the glare."

"Well, you must let me throw a little light on the subject, or our friend here will be falling over all the furniture; take care, Miss Lucy!"

With this he pulled up a blind, and Mrs. Richmond, with a quick cry of pleasure, started off the sofa where she had been lying.

"Ah, Lucy, my dear, how glad I am to see you! I thought you could not be here for another half-hour. I did not intend receiving you in this gloomy way. Come up stairs, and let me show you your room."

"We shall meet again at dinner-time," said Edgar. "I know you ladies will have plenty to tell each other, so I will keep out of the way until then."

Although Lucy was to a certain extent prepared by what she had heard from Edgar, she was startled and shocked to find, when they emerged into the full light, the great change a few weeks had effected in her friend's appearance.

She was thin and worn, and had dark shadows under her eyes, which were anxious in expression. She had too, a habit, which Lucy never remembered to have noticed before, of starting painfully at any unexpected noise. Her face, however, was not pale; but, on the contrary, slightly flushed.

Lucy saw at once it would be wiser not to notice anything unusual in her appearance, so she said, in an ordinary tone of interest, when they were seated in her friend's pretty room—

"I was sorry to hear, dear Mrs. Richmond, that you are not well; your husband seems to think the change of air may have been too sudden for you!"

"Yes, he thinks so; and pray Heaven it may be only that!" she answered, excitedly, the flush deepening in her face.

"But you don't feel seriously ill, do you?" inquired Lucy anxiously.

"No, not in any way that I can explain; but I am uneasy and restless, and a cloud seems to have come over my happiness. I know it is perfectly unreasonable; I have everything a woman could have to make her enjoy life, and a devoted, kind husband."

"But can you assign no reason for this feeling of depression?" asked Lucy.

"Well, only one, and that I am almost ashamed to mention, even to you. I would not have Edgar to know it for the world; he would think he had such a foolish weak-minded wife; and besides he would reproach himself."

"Please tell me what it is," urged Lucy.

"I am sure you would feel easier if you had some one to whom you could mention it."

"Well," answered Mrs. Richmond, glancing around nervously, "Edgar let out, quite unintentionally, the second day we were here, that this house was supposed to be haunted. We were in the garden, looking at the ivy and the window flowers, and I said what a pretty bright place it was. 'Yes,' he replied, 'not at all the conventional idea of a haunted house, is it?' Directly he had spoken, I saw he had made a mistake, for he tried to change the subject at once; but I would not have it, and at last made him explain everything."

Mrs. Richmond then repeated the same story Edgar had told at Eastcliffe.

"At first," she continued, "I did not think much of it, as I have never been in the least superstitious; but somehow or other for the last week I have been getting more and more uneasy. I cannot account for it in any other way—every night I go to bed tired, but I cannot sleep, I am so nervous and excited. Edgar tries every means to cheer me up, and mixes me the most tempting summer drinks, for I am always thirsty; but nothing seems to do me any good. I hope, Lucy dear, you won't be angry with me for not having told you of this before you came down; but I could not bear the idea of writing anything that would make you stay away."

"It would have to be a very substantial ghost to keep me away," replied Lucy laughing; "besides, I have not the slightest faith in ghosts; but I must admit I should not like to encounter a smuggler unexpectedly, and I vote we thoroughly explore the cellars."

Mrs. Richmond seemed relieved at Lucy's cheerful manner, which, however, was not entirely genuine. On the subject of the ghost she really felt no apprehension; but she was anxious and worried about her friend.

Hoping to distract her attention, she asked for news of her travels, and they sat and chatted pleasantly until it was time to dress for dinner.

All the evening Edgar devoted himself to their amusement, and was so kind and thoughtful to his ailing wife, that Lucy's heart quite warmed towards him, and she retired to rest feeling much puzzled and rather out of conceit with herself.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

GIVE BUSINESS MEN A CHANCE.—Here is a list, and it will be seen how soldiers and lawyers have really monopolized the Presidential office: Washington was a soldier; Adams a lawyer; Jefferson a lawyer; Madison a lawyer; Monroe a lawyer; Adams a lawyer; Jackson a lawyer; Van Buren a lawyer; Harrison a soldier; Tyler a lawyer; Polk a lawyer; Taylor a soldier; Filmore a lawyer; Pierce a lawyer; Buchanan a lawyer; Lincoln a lawyer; Johnson a politician; Grant a soldier; Hayes a lawyer; Garfield a lawyer; Arthur a lawyer Cleveland a lawyer. Lawyers, 16; soldiers, 5; politicians, 1.

Thus it will be seen that lawyers, soldiers or professional politicians are the classes to which the presidency has actually been confined. And yet we are the most practical business people on the face of the earth.

DR. W. H. HALE, an Edinburgh physician, who is traveling in this country, has a cane which he says cost over $3500. The head contains over three pounds of 18-carat gold and is mounted with sixty-five diamonds.

Bric-a-Brac.

THE CHOSEN GIRL.—A custom that has existed for four centuries is still maintained in some towns on the Lower Rhine. On Easter Monday—auction day—the town crier or clerk calls all the young people together, and to the highest bidder sells the privilege of dancing with the chosen girl, and her only, during the entire year. The fees flow into the public poor-box.

BETROTHAL RINGS.—When a couple are engaged in Russia a betrothal feast is held, and the bride-elect has a lock of hair cut off in the presence of witnesses, and given to the bridegroom, who in return presents a silver ring with a turquoise, an almond cake, and a gift of bread and salt. From this moment the two are plighted, nor can the relatives break off the match, except with the consent of the betrothed pair, which is signified by the return of the lock of hair and the ring. So much importance is attached to the ring—at least in the north of Russia—that, among poor people who cannot afford silver and turquoise, tin and a bit of bluestone are substituted. These betrothal rings are kept as heirlooms, and must not serve twice.

JEW AND PAGAN.—Some Roman senators examined Jews in this manner.—If God had no delight in the worship of idols, why did he not destroy them? The Jews made answer,—if men had worshipped only things of which the world had had no need, he would have destroyed the objects of their worship; but they also worship the sun and moon, stars and planets; and then he must have destroyed his world for the sake of these deluded men. But still, said the Romans, why does not God destroy the things which the world does not want, and leave those things which the world cannot be without? Because, replied the Jews, this would strengthen the hands such as worship these necessary things, who would then they,—Ye allow now that these are gods, since they are not destroyed."

THE PARSON'S TIDE.—At Llandrillo, near Polwyn Bay, in Wales, is a large fish weir formed by sticks, and enclosing a portion of the sea at high tide. Upon the rising of the water, any of the fish which have been swimming within the weir are, of course, detained by the sticks, and the inhabitants enjoy a considerable haul without the trouble of putting out to sea to obtain them. Dating from the days when the Church levied a tithe, in old Jewish fashion, upon nearly everything, the rector of Llandrillo claims the right to a tenth of all the fish caught; although the trouble of taking them daily hardly makes it worth the reverend gentleman's while, perhaps, to look after him finny perquisites whenever the tide ebbs. Accordingly, the tenth tide is called "the Parson's Tide," and every fish caught on that day belongs to the rectory.

AFTER A MOTHER.—Amongst the produce brought to the daily markets of China are sucking-pigs in search of a mother, as Chinese farmers do not care to allow one mother to suckle more than a dozen little piggies, whereas bountiful Nature occasionally sends a litter of nearly double that number. So whenever the births exceed the regulation limit, the supernumeraries are conveyed to the sucking-pig market, which is held daily in the early morning; and there the farmer whose styes have not been so abundantly blessed buys a few of the outcasts to make up his number. But lest the maternal sow should object to adopting the little strangers, her own babies are taken from her and placed with the new comers, when all are sprinkled with wine. When the combined litter is restored to the anxious parent she is so bamboozled by the fragrance of the whole party that she accepts the increased family without comment.

THE DEAD.—The Jews used to bury their dead under the earth, and this mode seems to have been the earliest in use. Egypt embalmed her corpses, and the earlier Greeks and Romans consumed the body after death by fire, the ashes only receiving sepulture. Subsequently in those nations this practice fell into disuse, at least partly, and then their dead bodies were buried in vaults or chambers under ground, such as the Catacombs. In ancient Rome the bodies of her most illustrious sons were permitted to be buried unburned, as a special mark of favor, within the walls of the city. The next step was the erection of churches over the graves of martyrs. Then emperors and kings were admitted to sarcophagi within the church walls. The extension of this practice was the origin of churchyards. These, in crowded towns, became unhealthy and offensive, and sanitary measures demanded burial without the walls of the city. Thus grew the beautiful resting-places of the dead, which, with their trees, flowers, landscape gardening, and works of monumental art, we call cemeteries. The word "cemetery," by the way, means slumber place, and is of Christian origin.

THE American dentist has becomes almost as fixed an institution in England as the French hairdresser or the German waiter. There are probably two score in London alone, commanding a patronage which would open the eyes of their professional brethren at home. I think dentistry is probably the only thing in which Englishmen would unanimously concede American supremacy. Why we should have made this department so thoroughly our own I am at a loss to say, but of this monopoly there can be no question.

A BIRTHDAY.

BY E. N.

Before your life that is to come,
Love stands with eager eyes, that vainly
  Seek to discern what gift may fit
  The slow unfolding years of it;
And still Time's slips are sealed and dumb,
And still Love sees no future plainly.

We cannot guess what flowers will spring
Best in your garden, bloom most brightly;
  But some fair flowers in any plot
  Will spring and grow and wither not;
And such wish-flowers we gladly bring,
And in that small hand lay them lightly.

Baby, we wish that those dear eyes
May see fulfilment of our dreaming,
  Those little feet may turn from wrong,
  Those hands to hold the right be strong,
That heart be pure, that mind be wise
To know the true from the true-seeming.

We wish that all your life may be
A life of selfish brave endeavor—
  That for reward the fates allow
  Such love as lines your soft nest now
To warm the years for you, when we,
Who wish you this, are cold for ever.

FOR LOVE OF HER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XX—(CONTINUED.)

Once or twice, too, the girl felt the hot, painful color flush her face at the thought of this tete-a-tete journey, at the remembrance of their interview on the previous evening; but neither by look nor word did the earl remind her of it. He was gentle and considerate and careful of her, but he had schooled his manner successfully to a kindly friendship, which Maud resented even while she hated herself for doing so. The girl's misery made her unjust and petulant. She felt ill and wretched and hopeless as if the trouble had come upon her greater than she could bear.

The wintry sunlight faded, and a cloud passing over it darkened the castle yard as they entered. Maud shivered and involuntarily drew nearer to her companion. As the great gates closed behind them, the girl felt a sudden sense of taint and dishonour.

The earl had obtained, through Mr. Gifford, permission to see the prisoner, but there was some slight delay during which they waited in the gaoler's room, where after a few minutes the governor of the castle came to them. He was a kindly, gentle, middle-aged man, with an air of command about him for all his kindly gentleness of manner. There was a look of sorrowful compassion on his face as his eyes rested on Maud, and when the girl held out her hand to him with a little pleading gesture, he took it kindly in his and said a few reassuring words.

"I must ask you to wait a few minutes," he said gently. "Will you come into my sitting-room; it will be pleasanter for you?"

It was a cheerful room, with large windows, overlooking that part of the yard laid out as a garden, in which even yet, in that sheltered spot, one or two hardy flowers blossomed. There were books in profusion, a writing-table strewn with papers, and a bunch of violets in a little blush-gray jar gave out a sweet fragrance.

Here the governor left them for a few minutes, and while they waited, a little yellow-haired boy put his head within the door and looked around for his father; then seeing the strangers he colored and hesitated, when Lord Dereham held out his hand with a smile, and the boy came boldly in, a sturdy little fellow of five or six in a sailor's dress, and after a few minutes' shyness was engaged in an animated chat with the earl, while Maud stood leaning against the window, looking at them both with sweet, wistful eyes, so infinitely sad that Lord Dereham could not meet them.

Presently the governor returned, and himself led Maud down the long stone passages, which at one time had rung with the tramp of armed men, and the rustle of rich robes and women's voices, but in which now they met but one man,—a gloomy-looking personage,—who, at the sight of Maud, started and stared.

Maud stared too, and stood suddenly still.

"Why, Dean!" she exclaimed; "I did not know you were here."

"I've been here some months, Miss Maud," he answered with a perceptible softening of his gruff voice, as he spoke to her. "Are you quite well, ma'am? and all the family?"

He did not wait for answer, but went on hurriedly, brushing his hand across his eyes. Maud looked after him pityingly, while the governor glanced at her inquiringly.

"You seem to know Dean, Miss Kinsley?" he said.

"Yes," she answered; "he is not a prisoner here?"

Captain Sinclair smiled.

"Oh, no, he is a gaoler! I think I remember now," he added, "that when he applied to me, he said that he had been in Dr. Kingsley's service."

"He was our coachman for years," Maud answered. "We liked him so much, and he married such a pretty young girl who was with us also. She died when they had been married a year, and poor Dean was almost mad with grief."

"Ah! He looks like a man who has known trouble," Captain Sinclair said gently. His own young wife had died soon after the birth of his youngest child, and the wound her death had made was unhealed yet.

"We lost sight of him after that, Maud remarked, as they went on down the stone passages. "How strange to find him here!"

He was standing at the door at which, presently, Captain Sinclair stopped, holding a great heavy key in his hand.

"Dean will see you are not disturbed," Captain Sinclair said gently; "Mr. Graeme is here!"

He bowed gravely and left her. As the man was about to insert the key in the lock of the arched door, Maud put her hand upon his arm.

"Wait a moment, Dean," she said, in a low tone of pain; "I am not ready yet."

The man waited gravely. There was a look of earnest sympathy upon his face as he watched her struggling with the sobs which rose in her throat.

She was in trouble now, whom he had known so bright and sweet, who had stood like a very angel of mercy beside his young wife's bed, soothing and tending her with all patience and gentleness; she in whose arms his wife had breathed her last sigh; she whose gentle hands had brought flowers, and made the last rest so fair that it almost seemed a sleep.

After a short time—a few minutes at most—Maud, who had been leaning against the stone wall, raised herself and stood up, calm and composed again.

"I am ready, Dean," she said quietly.

The man put the key in the lock and turned it with a sharp click, then opened the door and allowed her to pass in, and closed it after her.

It was a small room with a barred window set nigh in the thick stone wall, through which the daylight came feebly and scantily.

There was a pallet bed in one corner, a table and chairs in the centre of the room.

The walls were whitewashed and bare, but the scantiness and bareness of the room were redeemed by its extreme cleanliness.

There were writing materials on the table and Arnold Graeme was sitting before it, leaning his elbows upon it, and his head on his hands.

He was so absorbed in thought that he had not heeded the sound of a key turning in the lock, or the opening of the door, so that for a moment, Maud's entrance was unnoticed, and the girl stood pale and shivering in her warm furs; even when, turning with that strange instinct which tells us that we are being watched, he lifted his eyes and saw her, she was so near his thoughts that there was no surprise on his face; for a moment he hardly knew whether it was Maud herself who stood there, or whether he had conjured up her form in his own vivid imagination.

He himself was thinner, paler, more haggard looking than she had ever seen him; he had lost that look of high resolve and determination which he had worn when she had seen him last; he looked older too, much older.

Either the confinement had tried him, or he was regretting the sacrifice he had made Maud thought, with a great fear at her heart. Well if he did, it would not be any wonder.

For a minute the girl stood motionless, then as he did not speak to her, she moved a step towards him.

As she did so, he started nervously to his feet, and stood leaning one hand upon the table, looking at her with a startled glance.

"Maud," he said, in a low, hushed tone, "is it indeed you?"

"I think so," she said, smiling, as she held out both her little, trembling hands to him, and he took them in his own, and held them tight and close.

For a few moments neither spoke. Arnold was gazing at her face with a yearning, passionate look, thinking that the sight of her was as much refreshment to him as a draught of pure, fresh water to a thirsty man, and she was sorrowfully noting the change in him, the lines of care and anxiety upon his face, the shadows under his kind, grey eyes.

"And Gilbert?" he said gently at length; "how is he?—I heard that he was ill!"

"He is better," she replied with a little smile. "But is all the greeting I am to get a query about Gilbert's health?" she added with a little pout, which was a little marred by her quivering lips. "Are you not glad to see me? If you are not glad, don't you think it would be only civil of you to say that you were."

"Then I will be civil, and say so, Maudie," he said smiling. "I thought you would not require such an assurance."

"Then you were mistaken! I like to be told when people are glad to see me; I don't like to have to take it for granted," she replied lightly, although the tears had gathered thickly in her sweet, troubled eyes. "But I think I would even rather you did not say so if you did not mean it. Come, honestly, frankly, honor bright, tell me, are you glad I came?"

"What do you think yourself?" he asked, smiling at her with very tender eyes. "Do you know how I felt when you came in? As if I were the only person in the world."

"Ah!"

She understood the meaning of his words lightly as they were spoken.

"And now?" she asked softly.

"As if there were at least two," he replied gently. "You and I, Maudie! You and I!"

"Have you been well?" the girl asked, after another little pause.

"Quite well," he answered quietly. "And you, dear? and your sister?"

"She is so troubled for you," Maud said wistfully; "so troubled that, Arnold, I think the truth would have killed her."

"We must try and manage so that she shall never know the truth," he answered cheerfully. "I think we shall be able to do so. I hope we shall."

"Are you not too confident, Arnold?" she asked gently, looking up at him with restless, shining, questioning eyes. "Has anything happened, dear, to make you think that it will be difficult to prove your innocence, without implicating Gilbert?"

He hesitated for a moment, then he put her gently into the chair from which he had risen on her entrance.

"When you came in, Maud," he said, leaning against the table in a half-sitting, half-standing attitude, "I was just wondering whether I could write to you to ask you to come and see me; or if I could contrive what is in my mind without your assistance. Is your father here, Maud? It was good of him to bring you."

The question had been asked rather abruptly, as if the fact of her visit had suddenly struck him as something strange, and unusual, and unexpected.

Maud's delicate cheek was slightly reddened as she answered him.

"No, he is not here. It was not he who brought me," she said quietly.

"Who then, Maudie?"

He was holding her little gloved hand in his, and she was softly touching the ring she had placed upon his finger as she answered—

"Do you remember the evening we said 'good-bye' to each other?" she said softly; "you told me that if during your absence I needed advice or assistance, I was to go to Lord Dereham; that if I were in any difficulty, you were sure he would help me; and I obeyed you, Arnold."

His face had flushed slightly, but it was pale again as she went on, still stroking the broad gold band on his finger.

"So, as I knew papa would not bring me here, and as the wish to see you was very strong in my heart, I went to Lord Dereham and asked him to bring me here—to you."

Perhaps it was the pain on his face which made her conclude her speech with the two little words which at first she had not added. She was glad she had done so when she saw how his face brightened as he heard them.

"You came with him, dear?"

"Yes, he brought me. He has been very good, Arnold, and I think we may trust him even as you said we might."

"I think you may, Maud," he replied softly, and with a sudden movement his hand closed tightly over hers; she looked up startled, into his grave face.

"What is it, Arnold?" she asked quickly. "Have I vexed you?"

"Vexed me, dear! How could you? I was only wondering how I could say to you what I have to say."

"Is it anything very difficult to utter?" she asked, leaning her pretty head caressingly against his arm. "And am I so formidable a person?"

"I used to be terribly afraid of you," he answered smiling. "But I am not now. You used to be such a stately demoiselle that I looked upon you with awe, but now——"

"Now?" she repeated as he paused.

"Now you are only the sweetest, truest, gentlest woman the world holds!" he said unsteadily.

"Truest, gentlest!" she repeated with a little bitter laugh. "I, who make you suffer as you are suffering, and made him suffer hardly less."

"Have you made him suffer, dear?" he asked wistfully. "Never mind, he will not always suffer. You will make it all up to him by-and-by."

A little sorrowful smile curved his lips under his fair moustache as he gently unloosed his clasp of her hand and rose from his leaning posture. Maud rose also, and as he began to walk slowly up and down the little room, she slid her hand through his arm.

"Arnold," she began gently. "I wanted to ask you why you have refused all legal aid?"

"Who told you that I had done so?"

"Gwen. My father told her, and she repeated the statement to me."

"Did it astonish you, Maudie?"

"Yes, somewhat; but I thought you must have had a good reason for doing so."

"I had a good reason, dear, a very good one," he answered gently, as he looked down into the sweet, enquiring eyes. "You shall hear it soon."

A little silence fell between them. Arnold was in deep thought, hesitating within himself as to whether he should confide more in her, or whether he should keep his plan a secret, and yet, without confiding in her, it seemed impossible that he should succeed.

Maud's next words unconsciously helped him greatly.

"Do you know," she said, trying to speak lightly in her anxiety to remove some of the heavy cloud from his face, "that I have met a very old friend here?"

"Here, in the pri—in the castle?"

"Yes, in the castle."

"Is it Captain Sinclair?" Arnold queried gently. "He is a fine fellow, Maud, and has been very kind to me."

"Has he? Then I will thank him for that," she replied. "He seems very nice; but I did not mean Captain Sinclair, Arnold. He is not an old friend, for I never saw him before to my recollection. And the friend I mean is a very old friend indeed. He gave me my first riding lesson when I was five years old, on a little pony called Midge, which he had broken in for me."

"And he is here, Maudie? I am afraid your friends are of rather a shady description."

"Do you think so?" she asked, raising her pretty brows. "I do not. Besides, although Dean is here——"

"Dean?" he interrupted breathlessly, standing still in the middle of the little room, as he looked down upon her.

"Yes; Dean the warder. Is he your warder, Arnold? Yes, of course, he let me in here."

"And he is a friend of yours?"

"Yes. Are you surprised? He came to papa as groom just after I was born, and then became coachman. He only left us a year ago, when his wife died, so you may guess what a faithful servant he was; twenty years is a long service."

"Twenty years," he repeated mechanically, "yes, a long time."

"He was such a good, kind fellow, too," Maud continued musingly, "so devoted to us all, that we all regretted him when he left, but he could not bear the place after his wife died."

"After his wife died?" Arnold repeated, almost like an echo.

"Yes," Maud went on, her pretty regretful voice softening even more as she recalled the pathetic story. "She was our maid, Gwen's and mine, such a pretty girl, and he fell in love with her. She was twenty years younger than he was, and his love for her was almost like idolatry. She loved him, too, all the more, she told me on their wedding day, because he was so much older and graver."

"And then?"

"And then she died," Maud replied sorrowfully, "just a year after their marriage; she was never a strong girl, and though he was able to give her every comfort, and they had a pretty little home and were very happy, she drooped and died. She was consumptive, papa said, and another sister died of decline. But it is a sad little story," the girl said, breaking off suddenly, "and one not likely to interest you, Arnold."

"You little know how it interests me," he said earnestly. "Tell me all about it, Maud?"

She looked at him wonderingly, but continued—

"There is very little more to tell," she said. "Poor Fanny died; she was very fond of me, and I was much with her. She was the only person I have ever seen die," the girl added with a little tremor in her voice, "and it always seemed to me afterwards, that I could never be afraid of death. I was holding her head on my arm, and all her hair—she had such pretty, curly, chestnut hair—was falling over the pillow, and she looked at me and at her husband, and smiled and drew a long sigh, and I should not have known that she was dead but for his terrible grief. Poor Dean! I had always been a favourite of his; but I think he would do anything in the world for me now, because I was with Fanny, and did what I could for her at the last."

"You believe that, Maud?" Arnold Graeme asked suddenly, with an intense earnestness in his voice and in his gray eyes fixed upon her face.

"Yes, I really think so," she answered, in some surprise at his manner. "He was always a faithful man; but he was passionately grateful for the little I was able to do for Fanny."

"And you think he would serve you in any strait?"

"I do not think it," replied the girl steadily; "I am sure of it."

"We will put him to the test," Graeme said gravely. "Maud, I was almost in despair when you came in, but now I almost dare to hope.

CHAPTER XXI.

A PAUSE followed Graeme's words, which been spoken with an earnestness and gravity which impressed Maud strongly, and kept her silent.

She saw that there was a new eagerness in his eyes and a new hope upon his face, and wondered a little what had brought them there.

She could find no connecting link between Dean's pitiful little story and Arnold's present position. She was utterly unprepared for what she was about to hear.

Seeing the bewilderment on her face, the young man gently made her sit down, and, drawing up the only other chair the bare, little room contained, seated himself by her side.

"Maud," he said gently, "I want you to give me your best attention for the few minutes which are left to us."

"That is rather a formidable preamble," she answered, trying to hide the sudden fear which assailed her. "However, you shall have my very best attention."

"A little while ago, Maud, when you came in, I was wondering how I could communicate with you," he began gravely. "It has seemed to me for the last few days," he glanced for a moment at the ring on the finger, "that you were my only friend in England. Not, my child, that I am blaming anyone," he continued hastily seeing she was about to speak. "Far from it. Appearances are so strongly against me, facts are such stubborn things, that it was almost impossible for your father not to believe me guilty; and my innocence can only be proved in one way, Maud. You know what it is, dear."

She bowed her head in silence; the gentle patient intonation of his voice touched her keenly, so keenly that it was difficult for her to restrain her tears.

"That way can never be open to us," he continued. "I would die a thousand deaths, if need be, to prevent that. It is the only thing that seems terrible to me. Nothing else daunts me, Maud, nothing; no pain for myself, no suffering even for you, whom I love dearest in all the world, appals me. There is only one thing the future can give, which I feel as if I could bear, and that is that Bertie's guilt should become known."

"You love him so well?" she murmured, wondering even more at the suppressed passion in his voice, little thinking that it was assumed to make her yield to his plans.

"Yes, I love him well," he replied gravely. "But it is not only my love for Bertie which is the question, it is my honor. I have promised you, I have promised him, that he shall come off scathless, and I'd feel shamed and dishonored if I could not keep my word. And since I have been here, Maud, since I have had time to think, to reflect over things, to consider what is best to be done, do you know to what conclusion I have come?"

She looked up at him with startled eyes, in which he read an affirmative answer to the question he had asked.

"You have guessed it?" Arnold said gently. "Has it startled you too much for quiet thought, dear? Do not decide hastily; wait until I have told you my reasons for thinking it the best."

She kept her eyes upon his face, but he was not looking at her.

He had slightly turned away from her, and his eyes were raised to the high barred window, through which nothing was visible but a gleam of the grey, wintry sky.

"I have been thinking," he said in a tone of studied calmness, "that the ordeal of a trial is one that I am not prepared for. It is not that I dread the result for myself—you know that, Maud, I am sure; but I fear lest a trial will bring the truth to light."

"The truth!" she repeated faintly.

"Yes, the truth!" he echoed after her. "If I am forced to stand my trial, I dare not count upon Gilbert's guilt remaining unsuspected. The examination will doubtless be a most searching one. Evidence given in a court of justice will seem a far graver thing than testimony given before a coroner's jury. How can we be sure, Maud, that Ellen Baxter will not betray us? How can we be certain that a closer investigation will not bring the truth to light, and so increase Bertie's disgrace a thousandfold? For people will not believe what we know, dear—that this deception was forced upon him by me; but they will imagine that he connived at it to shift the guilt on to my shoulders."

She listened in perfect silence; his eyes were still turned away from her face, or he would have seen how very pale she had grown.

"You see the dread which is troubling me," he went on, his voice a little unsteady now; "a dread which grows with every hour which brings the ordeal nearer. I have thought, and thought, and thought—until my brain has grown confused, and I can depend on it no longer; but even now it seems clear to me that the best way out of this difficulty is,"—he hesitated for a moment, then added firmly, — "by flight."

He turned to her now, and took the little, trembling hands in his.

"Does it seem a very base and cowardly subterfuge to you, Maud? Do you think that I am trying to go back of my word to you and to Bertie? Do you suppose that now, when the time has come to prove my devotion to your brother, my love for you, my gratitude to your father, I shrink from the ordeal? Maud, if you think so you are wrong."

"If I thought so I should be wrong indeed," the girl answered with sudden passion. "How can you think me so blind, Arnold? Ah, how little you understand me, even now. This flight which you propose: do you not think I see your motive for it? If you escape from prison, even if you try and fail, such an escape, such an attempt stamps you as guilty in the eyes of all. You may as well confess yourself guilty to the whole world."

She rose to her feet, her face kindling into radiance, as her eyes looked frankly into his, with a great admiration in their lustrous depths.

"You shall not so condemn yourself," she said passionately. "I will not have it. You are generous, oh, so generous, but such a sacrifice as the one you propose, such a depth of self-abnegation I cannot accept. I will not, Arnold."

He took her hands in his once more, and for a moment he looked long and steadily into her eyes.

He read in them admiration, respect, affection perhaps, but no love.

"You must accept it," he said firmly. "You will do so with less difficulty, with no difficulty, I hope, when you have heard me out. If I can escape, all this trouble and anxiety will be over; I shall be free, there can be no trial, Bertie can breathe free once more. The few people who have heard of the gamekeeper's death, and the coroner's verdict, will say that I am guilty, but what of that? Their opinion will be of little importance to me, whom they do not know, of whom, until now, they have never heard!"

He paused for a moment, but went on hurriedly, when she seemed about to speak.

"As for the sacrifice, there is none," he continued; "I have no home in England; I have no friends in England, an obscure artist like myself can have few anywhere and those I have abroad are not likely, even if this should reach them, which is most improbable, to believe me guilty if I assert my innocence. You know me to be innocent, dear, and you are the only one whom I shall leave behind, who will remember me three months hence. I lose nothing by going. I gain everything."

She was looking up at him with piteous eyes, full of questioning and wistful compassion, her lips were trembling too much for speech.

"You see it will be best, my dearest," he said earnestly; "I would not propose it to you, if I had not thought it over thoroughly; I have looked at it from every point of view; I have overlooked nothing, I think, and there is only one difficulty in the way, Maud."

He smiled slightly as he spoke the last words.

"What is it?" she asked slowly.

"The difficulty of escaping," he replied, still smiling, but with a great gravity under the smile. "And that until a few moments ago seemed insurmountable; now it seems so no longer."

He gently relinquished the little hands which had been lying passive in his own, and rising to his feet, began to pace thoughtfully up and down the small space of the stone floor of his prison room.

Maud watched him in silence, the natural quickness of her intuition seemed dulled just now.

She felt almost as if she had been stunned by some heavy blow.

Escape; how could he escape from that great castle? It was impossible! it was impossible!

She saw plainly enough the danger which lurked in the prospect of the trial, and the closer investigation into the cause of Joe Kirby's death.

She saw that it was more than likely that her brother, or Ellen Baxter would betray the secret kept at so great a cost, and that Gilbert's shame and guilt would be infinitely greater in the eyes of his judges than they would be if he had been true and confessed his guilt.

She felt sick, and faint, and powerless at the prospect, and helpless to avert the shame.

Presently Arnold paused in his walk, and came back to her side.

"Why do you look so troubled, dear?" he said gently; "thanks to your kindness of heart, I think the greatest difficulty will be overcome. Two or three times I have been on the point of speaking to Dean, hoping that I should prove the truth of the saying that every man has his price, but I am glad I hesitated now. What money perhaps would not purchase from him, we may obtain from his gratitude to you. Is he a man who has many ties to bind him to his mother country?"

"No," Maud answered slowly, "he has no one in England I think; he had a sister married in Australia."

"In Australia," Graeme echoed with a smile, "everything seems to play into our hands, Maud."

He looked excited and eager, and the light of hope had deepened in his grey eyes.

"Can I do anything, Arnold?" she asked very faintly. "Can I help your plans?"

"I will lay as few burthens on your shoulders as I can, my darling," he answered, touched with sudden compassion for the pain and fear upon her face. "All I will ask you to do now, Maud, is to tell Dean your belief in my innocence, and ask him to help me for your sake. The rest, with his help, I can manage, I think. In any case, Maud, do not distress yourself more than you can help; after all, if the attempt fails, we shall be no worse off than we were."

A knock sounded at the door; Maud started and trembled, Graeme turned his face towards it.

"Come in," he said quietly; but the door was only partly opened, and Dean put his head in and said, in a tone so gentle that it was strangely out of harmony with his gruff exterior—

"Time's up, Miss Maud."

"She is almost ready," Graeme said quietly. "Give me a few minutes more, Dean, if you can."

"I will sir, if I lose my place for it," the warder said gruffly; and he drew back and was reclosing the door, when Graeme called him back.

He came in with some reluctance; but when his eyes rested upon Maud, who sat drooping over the table, his glance softened, and he moved his hands rather nervously.

"Don't take on, Miss Maud," he said in a very low voice. "It will all come right, by-and-by, if the gentleman is innocent."

"He is innocent, Dean," Maud said, suddenly rising and holding out her little hand to the warder, "and I wanted to say to you, that if you can do anything for him, and will do it, I shall feel grateful to you as if you had done it for myself, even more grateful——"

She was moved and weeping now; the warder looked from her to Graeme with a quisk, questioning glance.

"If I can do anything for you, Miss Maud," he said quietly, after a moment's pause, "I'll do it. I shall be glad to do it, at any cost to myself. You may be sure of that."

He turned abruptly and went quickly out.

Arnold Graeme drew a long breath of relief.

"He will help me," he said quietly; "all will be well. And now, Maud, I must let you go."

There had been relief and hope upon his face a moment before; now it was white to his lips as he turned to her.

He felt that this parting was forever—that when he let her go from him out of that bare, grim room, he let her go from him forever.

He took her gently into his arms, and looked long and tenderly at the sweet face upraised to his, as if he wished to engrave it on his mind.

She was very pale, and there were dark shadows under her eyes which gave them a most pathetic beauty, and great teardrops on the long black lashes.

"My life, my darling—good-bye!" he murmured when he could speak. "May your life be a happy one, Maud—happy as even I could wish it it to be. May this trouble be the only one your life shall know."

He bowed his head over hers until his cheek rested on the golden hair.

She felt the passionate throbs of his heart against her shoulder, the quick breathing—almost like sobs—so close to her ear.

"It is only for a little while," she whispered, frightened at the intensity of his emotion. "I will go to you, Arnold, when you are free, and I will try to make up for all you have suffered for me."

He smiled faintly. He knew that he would never take advantage of her generosity; that when they parted under the shadow of those old gray walls which surrounded them, they would in all probability never meet again.

"You remember the words I spoke to you a week ago, Maud," he continued gently, touching her hair with a tender hand. "Let no memory of me darken your life; remember only that I love you, that I shall always love you, and no other woman, but that you are free. I will keep your little ring, my dearest. I will never part with it until I die; and before death comes, I will ask some kind soul by my bedside to take it off my finger when I am dead and send it back to you."

"And until I get it back," she said steadily, "I shall hold myself ready to go to you wherever you are, when you send for me, Arnold."

"You must not, dear," he said earnestly. "I will not have it. Your life can never be linked with mine, never. You are entirely free, Maud, always remember that."

There was a despairing hopelessness in his voice, he knew that the flight which he meditated erected an insurmountable barrier between them forever; that the world, to Maud's father, it was a tacit avowal of guilt.

Almost for a moment he felt angry that she did not apparently understand this, that by flight he covered himself with guilt and dishonor, and went forth into the world with the brand of Cain upon his brow.

"I may come again," she said presently. "Perhaps Lord Dereham will bring me again to you, Arnold."

"You must not come again, dear," he said, very gently. "This is no fit place for you, and it hurts me to see you here. Besides, suspicion might be aroused, and," his voice was weak with the strong effort he made to keep it calm, "you must go now, Maud, I dare not keep you any longer."

"I cannot go," she muttered. "It seems so horrible to leave you here. You will let me hear from you? This week of silence has been so terrible."

"If I can, safely," he answered. "Maud, go, while I have strength to let you go."

He loosed her from his arms and turned away with a blind, almost unconscious movement of passionate agony; his face was white and rigid like one suffering physical agony, the bitterness of death was in this parting from her.

As she stood, still hesitating, trembling, fearful at the sight of this anguish she could not understand, he turned to her again, caught her in his arms, and held her pressed closely and passionately to his beating heart.

"I will be true, I will be true," the girl sobbed wildly as she clung to him, and though his eyes were blind and sightless just then, he forced a smile to his parched white lips.

"You will be true," he murmured. "Ah, love, yes, be always true to the man whom you love, but I am not he."

The last words were inaudible, stifled in his throat.

He stooped his lips to her brow and kissed it once.

"Farewell," he said, and turning from her, gently putting away the clinging arms, he fell heavily into a chair by the table, and throwing his arms across it, hid his pale face upon them, so that he might not see her go.

CHAPERR XXII.

MAUD never knew clearly how she got out of the castle into the fresh, sweet air of the outer world, which seemed so sweet and fresh in its reviving influence to her then.

She retained a vague remembrance of Dean leading her through the long passages, saying a few consoling words in his gruffly-gentle voice, and joining Lord Dereham in the governor's cheerful sitting-room.

She remembered, too, that there was a fragrance of violets, which took her back to the morning when Arnold had brought the violets to her at Ivyholme, and she looked around her with a vacant look, half expecting to find herself in the dining room at her father's house.

She thanked Captain Sinclair mechanically, speaking words which seemed to have no meaning in her ear, and she fancied that he looked strangely at her, and she wondered, with a thrill of fear, whether he could have discovered what they had been talking of; and then things seemed dark and confused until the heavy clang of the closing gates resounded behind her and she found herself walking through the long lines of leafless poplars with Lord Dereham's anxious eyes looking into hers.

"I wish I had brought a carriage for you," he was saying gently. "You are not fit to walk, and it is cold."

She roused herself with an effort, and looked up at him smiling; her hand was through his arm, the wind was blowing the little silken curls about her white brow.

"I am so glad you have not," she said. "The air seems so sweet and pure after that dreadful place; it is pleasant here. How much time have we before our train leaves?"

The earl looked at his watch.

"More than an hour," he answered gently. "What would you like to do, Maud?—you must be faint and tired. Shall we go somewhere and have some tea?"

"Not yet," she said feverishly; "the air is so good—the fresh air of heaven. I felt stifled there. May we stay here a little?—we can sit down."

"You will be cold, dear."

"No, no; I am well wrapped up. My hands are burning hot."

A minute before, when he had touched them, they had felt like ice through her glove; now, even through the kid, he felt that they were very hot."

"Come and sit down," she said, with a pitiful attempt at gaiety. "We will try to imagine that the trees are in full leaf, and that the June roses are blossoming somewhere. I suppose they are, too," she added, stretching out her hands with a little longing gesture, "even if we cannot see them."

"There are plenty of roses at Dereham," he said gently: "if you will let me send you some."

The girl flushed up to her brows, as she remembered the rose she had stolen and hidden in her breast the evening before.

"You send flowers enough to keep Ivyholme in blossom all the year round," turning away her face from his tender, sorrowful eyes. "They are one of our greatest pleasures, Gwen's and mine."

Her lips were quivering with pain, and her voice was a little unsteady; as he looked at her he saw that the tears had welled up into her eyes, and were rolling slowly down her colorless cheeks.

"It has been very painful for you," he said gently. "Was I right to bring you, Maud?"

"Quite right," she answered briefly, and a silence fell upon them as they sat under the leafless trees.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THEIR USE.—Persons who dislike snakes continually ask, "What is the use of them?" That they are not without use will, I hope, appear in the course of this item; were it necessary to preach that all things have their use. But in one habit that offended Lord Bacon, namely, of "going on their belly," lies one of their greatest uses, because that, together with their internal formation and external covering, enables them to penetrate where no larger carnivorous animals could venture, into dark and noisome morasses, bog jungles, swamps, amid the vegetation of the tropics, where swarms of the lesser reptiles, on which so many of them feed, would otherwise only balance the harmony of nature, die and produce pestilence. Wondrously and exquisitely constructed for their habit, they are able to exist where the higher animals could not, and while they help to clear those inaccessible places of the lesser vermin, they themselves supply food for a number of smaller mammals, which, with many carnivorous birds, devour vast numbers of young snakes. The hedgehog, weasel, ichneumon, rat, peccary, badgar, hog, goat, and an immense number of birds keep snakes within due limits, while the latter perform their part among the grain-devouring and herbivorous lesser creatures. Thus beautifully is the balance of nature maintained.

HOW IT AFFECTS THEM.—Male birds behave in a ludicrous fashion during their mating season. Jackdaws, ordinarily so restless and chattering, are completely sobered at the contemplation of the serious step they are about to take in choosing a mate. They may be seen sitting in pairs on weathercocks, the roofs of churches, or even the boughs of tall elms, in early spring, getting as close to each other as they possibly can, and then neither cawing or moving, as if the adorable one's perfections had entirely annihilated their ordinary activity. At a certain age, the shy human male often exhibits this jackdaw kind of love, and is entranced if he may but gaze upon his lady's beauty. Very confiding are lapwings in the mating season. They leave the uplands, or the fields by the river, and draw near roads and habitations, preferring pastures to their ordinary haunts in arable fields. Here they are tolerably fearless as men and carriages pass by, in a fashion very different from their shy mood a fortnight ago, and run about erecting their beautiful crests, and showing off the sheen of their feathers to the greatest advantage.

WILLIAM E. DIZAN, of Wheelock, Vt., has been arrested, charged with murdering his five infant children by crushing in their heads with a blow of his fist.

THE DEATH OF LOVE.

BY J. CAMPBELL.

And is he dead at last? He lingered long,
Despite the fevers fits of doubt and pain;
It seemed that faith had won in a well-contested strife.
"He could keep him by his pulse, heart, true waking
Quite of so many youth and hope and trust,
How could he crucify him to mistrust them?"

Scatter no flowers on the dark, bleak earth;
Plant no white lilies; no blue violet bloom,
Weep not for him, for he is dead to tears.
Why should life strive to nourish his tomb?
Even gentle memory is no friend to him,
To honor aught that died as that Love did.

Let the rank grasses flourish fearlessly,
Why not food for the ox to graze, and cow and fee
Tread the long turf, for it is hopeless, can do him
Harm no more. Let the nettle and the thistle
The only flowers to grow upon his grave.

FORTUNE'S HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

SWIFT is the change from cold despair to warm delight, from weary indifference to zeal, glad, trembling hope.

She rushes through the hall, then checks herself with difficulty, all smiles and dimples and shining eyes and tremulous lips.

"Am I all right, Jane? Does my hair look very untidy? Oh, pick off that long thread. Those horrid train dwellings, I must look like nothing on earth. Now, how do I look?" with a hurried turn in front of the looking-glass.

And then she tries hard to enter gracefully and sedately; but all in vain.

The door of the drawing-room seems to a rosy, with both hands held out before her, bright, with streaming tears and hysteric distorted smiles.

"Oh, Lady Nora, where is he—where is he? Oh, dear Lady Nora!" she grasps her dainty mother-in-law with her strong, young arms, crushing her exquisite toilette, and regardless apparently of working destruction to her diamonds and flowers and laces, but Lady Nora's evident dismay—"where is my husband?"

"My dear child, How are you, Yolande, dear?" Lady Nora says, trying to free herself from her grasp, and knitting her delicate brows, the kind bravery and tenderness of which are perfect. "Pray don't give way like excitement, dear, or I cannot tell you anything."

The other ladyship says just a little peevishly, while avoiding the wild yearning of the poor little fruitful eyes, and wincing indeed at the task that is before it.

"I received your letter—forwarded to me from Paris, dear," Lady Nora begins smilingly—"just as I was leaving them this morning. I—I have a good deal to tell you."

Lady Nora's fingers tremble nervously as she adjusts her lace and looks down at her handsome, jewel hands, and then up at Yolande, who is standing stiffly at her with a look of wide-eyed mistrust and suspicion that Lady Nora is screened and flattered out of her pretty assumption of composure.

"I came down by my son's desire to see you, dear," she goes on, trying to still, and so far as I am concerned, I may tell you, she adds, a very natural perturbation, "as he was unable to leave his wife at the present moment. Of course, I was very much disposed with Dallas's conduct, and I am not going to tell you, I don't suppose, as an old friend," Lady Nora repeats, with a new quaver of pathos, evident even in her voice and manner, "that I should just advise you to travel about, or go up to town and enjoy yourself—there is no earthly reason why you should not do so—or perhaps, with courage—and to be truthful, I should think Dallas will be less inclined to his society, when I am quite sure he has been temporary leave. You have heard of course about the late Earl's will."

"No," Yolande replies faintly, what will you tell me about, dear Lady Nora, if—if—well I suppose I ought not to ask—I had written to you? Does he know what I said—proposed?"

The words are very broken, and a very faint flush of womanly pride struggles with the pallor of wounded love in anguish.

"Won't he come down even to see me, and let me know how he is? Is he angry with me? Is he—is he ill?"

"Dallas is quite well, I believe," Lady Nora says, speaking slowly and with evident reluctance, "and I am sure he is not angry with you, Yolande. You know I said I should tell you everything, I please to and must be honest."

Lady Nora is in a terrible state indeed.

"My dear, you are not going to be ill, I hope, or anything silly," she says, with a little irritation, as Yolande sways forward, and then backward, and sinks into a chair, with a low, moaning cry. "You know I said I should tell you everything, and I must do my duty, however painful it may be. Dallas has behaved very badly to you, very badly indeed, and I am not going to defend him, but I am sure he is not angry with you, Yolande, dear. He is only—only—"

"Only what?" Yolande asks, with a sudden, fierce change of manner, and a sudden, fierce flash of her dark eyes. "Only what? Tell me the truth, Lady Nora, I implore you. Only what?"

"Only very much disgusted," Lady Nora says, with a little gasp, "and I am sure I don't wonder at it. I am sure I am disgusted myself

been to raise money on that, when he knew how dreadfully hard up we were."

"Yes," Yolande replies, with a bitter smile and a burning flush of shame and misery, "they exchanged rings—her diamond-and-sapphire for his red cameo, pledges of brighter days in store for them, when they can reward each other's constancy."

No sooner has she uttered this speech than Yolande repents of having spoken it.

To expose her husband's faithlessness, to blame and ridicule him, is surely an unwifely deed of vulgar and commonplace wifely vengeance.

Swiftly as the mischief has been done, the seed is sown which is to bring forth a bitter harvest.

Yolande is to regret those words with many a vain regret, and they cost Joyce Murray a coronet and blast her ambitious career forever.

"You don't say so!" Lady Nora says, looking excited, amused, bright-eyed at the prospect of scandal.

And every moment Yolande feels more and more ashamed of herself.

"When did this happen? When you were at Pentreath? Too bad of Joyce, I must say. Really hardly proper, you know, carrying a flirtation so far, and with a bridegroom too! It is foolish of an unmarried woman to attempt that fast style; it only spoils her chances," Lady Nora observes sagely; "and, though Joyce is a favorite with men, she is rather 'hanging on,' you know. I shouldn't wonder a bit if she married wretchedly, after all! I shouldn't," Lady Nora adds lightly, "I should advise you not to trouble yourself in the least, dearest, about a piece of sentimental folly like that; men do get absurdly sentimental sometimes when one least expects it. I daresay he has almost forgotten his nonsense by this time, except when he thinks of his dear little wife, whom he has vexed, poor fellow!"

And Lady Nora's daughter-in-law acknowledges this pretty, half-bantering speech with a proud cold glance.

"You will stay and dine with us, I hope, Lady Nora?" she says, rising, with a courteous smile. "Allow me to show you to your room; and your maid shall bring you up some tea."

"Thanks, dearest," Lady Nora responds graciously; "I shall be glad of some of your delicious tea."

So Yolande takes her upstairs into the largest and best of their spare rooms, which is, of course, in admirable order and swathed in clean calico dust-covers, which, being removed, disclose everything spotless, shining, and in perfect readiness, with the exception of the chamber-linen and fresh water to be supplied.

She wheels forward an easy-chair for her, brings her own freshest and prettiest tea-gown of pale blue cashmere and creamy lace, and then sends her up a dainty tray with tea and pound-cake.

Lady Nora, whose worldly heart is just now a little sore and sensitive from the chafing of debts and worries, gushes over the girl's attention in sweetest words of gratitude.

"Oh, you darling thoughtful girl!" she exclaims. "How I wish I could have you always with me."

And in this speech are the pith and marrow of Lady Nora's purpose in visiting her son's wife.

She has come, feeling very uncertain about her reception, but determined to risk the chance of coldness and rebuffs.

The opinion or the displeasure of insignificant people like the Dormers is not of the least account with Lady Nora, except so far as they affect herself materially.

And she has come, not so much to break the news of Dallas's departure to Yolande and condole with her as to borrow money from her.

For poor little Lady Nora is, as she herself has plaintively said, "dreadfully hard up" indeed.

Creditors have begun to grow malevolent, dunning letters omnipresent, debts to be represented only by a sign expressing an unknown quantity.

And, though Lady Nora still possesses wardrobe trunks full of exquisite dresses, and enough jewelry to make her pretty hands and ears sparkle, though she still owns a waiting-woman and a tiny fox-terrior, of coin of the realm she really possesses but a very inadequate sum—some four or five sovereigns and a handful of loose silver—wherewith to support herself, her maid, and her dog in fashionable apartments for an indefinite length of time.

Things are about as bad with Lady Nora as they can well be; and it is quite possible that, if Yolande had been inclined to be hard and imperious with Lady Nora, she would have found her surprisingly meek and yielding.

But, as it is, her ladyship thinks she sees her path smooth before her.

"A pretty little place, Moodie," she remarks to her maid, as she sips her tea, "but rather lonely for my poor little daughter-in-law now that Captain Glynne has gone abroad. I must try to persuade her to run down to Eastbourne, or, better still, across to Trouville or Biarritz with me for a little change."

"Yes, my lady," the young woman, who is Moodie by name and disposition, agrees with sulky deference. "But—beggin' your pardon, my lady—I must keep to what I said last evening. It isn't so much that I'm in need of anything; but I really can't do without some wages."

"I think you're very unreasonable," Lady Nora says sharply. "I gave you two pounds for pocket-money some little time since, and you have heaps of clothes. I am obliged to do without a thousand things until my income is due."

For Lady Nora has a small income, the source of which nobody knows—not even her son—and the existence of which she affirms or denies as it best suits her at the time.

This income she regularly overdraws, and spends the cheque that she receives to the last shilling within a week.

"However, I will see what I can do for you when Mrs. Glynne and I make our arrangements this evening," Lady Nora adds conciliatingly. "I should be very sorry to part you, Moodie."

And, when her ladyship comes upstairs to bed the same night, Moodie feels sure the "arrangements" have been eminently satisfactory.

Her mistress is in the best possible spirits, and, opening her desk to write some letters, she hands Moodie a crisp ten-pound note.

"Now will that do?" Lady Nora says, smiling graciously. "I have thought of you first, Moodie, though there are a score of other people bothering me for money."

"Thank you very much, my lady," Moodie says, clutching this long over-due instalment of her wages. "There are six pounds more, you know, my lady; but that doesn't matter just now."

"Oh, very well! I'll pay you some more next week," Lady Nora replies sharply. "Please don't worry me any more. You must go up to town in the morning, and take my luggage to Victoria Station. Mrs. Glynne and I are going to Eastbourne."

CHAPTER XXVI.

LADY Nora, by dint of her smiles and her sweetness and her high-mindedness and adroitness, has smoothed away every obstacle in her path at present.

She is "taking the dear child away for change of air and scene, lest she should grieve or mope after her husband," she says assuming her sweetest maternal manner.

"My boy has erred—I confess it—erred against his little wife and myself in so determinedly following the dictates of his own independent spirit," she admits to Mr. Dormer, with patient dignity that rather overawes his angry mood.

"I can't say that I think your son has treated my poor niece well, Lady Nora," Mr. Dormer says obstinately. "He's gone and deserted her—that's about what he've done, my lady. If she hadn't a penny in her pocket, nor a home to go to, he'd have done the same; and she's well rid of him," he adds, quite purple in the face with suppressed grief and wrath.

"You are wronging my son, Mr. Dormer," Lady Nora says, still with patient dignity—"cruelly wronging him. You know it was because your niece was rich and my dear boy was poor, having lost his income and expectations at one blow, that he determined to go abroad."

"What's he going to do abroad then?" Mr. Dormer demands irately. "He've not treated our Yolande well, nor none of us well, my lady, whatever 'ee please to say. He should have come to me, and told me his circumstances, and not bolt off without so much as sayin' good-bye."

"He could not have endured to tell Yolande he was going from her. My dear son has deep feelings," Lady Nora says, with her handkerchief to her eyes.

Mr. Dormer growls, unconvinced, but Miss Keren interferes.

She is more than ever convinced that Lady Nora has "a nice mi-end."

She begins therefore to take Lady Nora's part and her son's part, and into her sympathising ears Lady Nora pours the woes of her motherly heart and the details of Dallas's departure, inventing touching speeches of farewell, in which he has mentioned all his wife's relatives by name and sent them his love.

"I know I am leaving my poor darling little wife in good tender care and keeping, mother,' he said," says Lady Nora, with a choking little sob or two. "'Her aunt is like one of the best of mothers to her, and her dear uncle like a father; so I shall have the comfort of knowing my Yolande is safe and in a happy home when I am far away.' He forgot," Lady Nora adds, with sweet pathos, "that we who love him—she and I—cannot be really happy while he is far from us. But we must try to cheer each other up until the happy day when he returns," her ladyship continues; "and so I am going to take my little daughter away from you, dear Miss Dormer, to have her all to myself for a while. Besides," she adds, in a lower tone, "it looks better for the dear child to be with me during her husband's absence. The censorious world, you know, dear Miss Dormer, is so apt to put cruel constructions on things."

"Yes; it's better, since the fellow's ran away from her, that she should be with her mother-in-law," Mr. Dormer says gruffly to his sister. "I wish we never saw none of them, for my part."

And indeed Mr. Dormer hasten thousand good reasons for saying so, since he has sunk that number of sovereigns in the Pacific Salvage Company and in some Welsh quarries by the advice, and through the influence of Lord Glynne now Earl of Pentreath, and has but very faint hopes of seeing a shilling of his ten thousand pounds again.

Be that as it may, he consents willingly enough to Yolande's departure with her mother-in-law on the following day; and the initial step in the mutual cheering up which Lady Nora and Yolande are to yield each other is that some of Lady Nora's most clamorous creditors are appeased, and her son's wife gives her a hundred and fifty pounds and pays all her expenses.

* * * * * * *

It is a gloomy day at Eastbourne, and Lady Nora is in a very gloomy temper. The place is insufferably dull, she declares, and she urges Yolande in vain to run up to London for even the fag-end of the season.

She knows one or two houses from which she is tolerably sure of receiving invitations, and, late as it is, there is a prospect of a few parties in town, beside water-parties at Henley and Maidenhead.

The idea of a few fresh pretty dresses for regattas and tennis-parties, or boating-parties, is like a breath of new life to Lady Nora.

For it is a solemn and terrible fact, which makes Lady Nora feel inclined to shed tears of self-pity when she thinks of it, that she has not dared to get one new dress this season from her regular modiste.

She has been obliged to make shift with cheap materials and have them made up by her maid.

"But for my face, I couldn't have gone out of doors at all!" Lady Nora thinks bitterly.

Her store of handsome lace flounces has been her only resource in furnishing her with a few fresh morning and evening toilettes.

All this is changed now, and Lady Nora's vengeful and troublesome Madame Celestine, who has received a large instalment on account of her bill, is transformed into a most obliging person anxious only for the honor of supplying "miladi" with an exquisite confection for Goodwood or Henley.

But Yolande has hitherto obstinately refused to even think of London, or Biarritz, or Trouville, or any other gay or fashionable resort.

She hates London, she hates parties, she hates gaiety of all description, she tells Lady Nora and she adds that, even if she goes up to town, or on the Continent, to please her, nothing will induce her to go to parties of any description.

"Then people will talk abominably about you, and say that you and Dallas have quarreled horribly, and that he has left you, and that you are grieving for him, and lots of other unpleasant things," Lady Nora says spitefully—she knows by this time where to wound Yolande most surely.

"I am grieving for myself more than for any one," Yolande retorts coldly.

"What are you grieving for?" Lady Nora asks snappishly.

"For myself," Yolande answers again; and Lady Nora is obliged to desist, though she is almost vexed enough to wreak her disappointment on her daughter-in-law in some overt manner.

Eastbourne is dull—there is no denying it; there are very few people there at present, and none of Lady Nora's set.

There is an east wind blowing, the hotels are half empty, the pier and esplanade deserted; and so, though her load of debts is greatly lessened, and she herself lapped in luxury and ease, Lady Nora is utterly dissatisfied.

"If this sort of thing is to go on, it would have been ever so much better had I borrowed a couple hundred pounds from her and gone to Monaco," Lady Nora thinks discontentedly. "I certainly never contemplated playing companion and duenna to a prim romantic girl in low spirits, with not an idea in the world beyond love and religion. I might as well have gone into a convent at once."

However, as the fiction of her being in charge of Yolande and having taken her away for the benefit of her health must be kept up a little longer, her ladyship submits with the best grace she can, and gets through the dull quiet days by the aid of the morning chair-rides to and from her warm salt bath and an unlimited quantity of novels, which she reads, nestled upon a couch near the fire, though it is the middle of July.

On this bleak, gusty afternoon Lady Nora is deep in the third volume of a present-romance, and Yolande writing at a table in the window—she is always writing, Lady Nora declares pettishly.

"Writing a novel, dear, are you—some sweet little tale of love and sorrow?" she queries, when the sound of the steadily-traveling pen hour after hour irritates her into sarcasm.

"I am trying if I can write anything for the press," Yolande answers simply and honestly, with a quick flush. "But please don't ask me anything about it, Lady Nora. It is a poor little first effort, and I am quite sure no editor will care for it."

"You are quite sure he won't, but you hope he will, I suppose?" Lady Nora says disagreeably. Her ladyship can be very disagreeable when it is not worth while to preserve her veneer of sweet amiability. With an impatient frown she tosses aside the finished volume she has been reading. "Half the novels that are written are nothing but utter rubbish, milk-and-water rubbish," she says scornfully; "and, of all rubbish, those written by stupid sentimental women are the worst. I like a man's book—I like a good French novel; that does interest one. There you find brilliant fearless writing, penned by people who know what they are talking about."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MARBLE CEMENT.—An excellent cement for broken marble statuary may be made by adding half a pint of vinegar to half a pint of skimmed milk. Mix with this the whites of five eggs well beaten; then sift in, with constant stirring, sufficient powdered quicklime to form a paste.

Scientific and Useful.

FOR SCREWS.—According to a French industrial paper, a mixture of oil and blacklead will effectually prevent screws becoming fixed, and, moreover, protect them for years against rust. The mixture facilitates tightening up, is an excellent lubricant, and reduces the friction of the screw in its socket.

TELL-TALE PAINT.—Of interest to engineers is a tell-tale paint, the invention of an Englishman. If the bearings of an engine are covered with this paint, the normal color of which is a brilliant red, and such bearings run hot, the paint will darken in color, until at 180° Fhuren neit it is quite brown. As the paint cools it recovers its original color.

THE FEET.—If the feet are tender and painful after long standing or walking, great relief may be obtained by bathing them in warm salt and water. A large handful of salt to a gallon of water as warm as can be borne is the proper proportion. The feet should be immersed, and the water thrown over the legs as far as the knees. When the water becomes too cool, dry the feet and legs, rubbing with a rough towel upward.

HOLES IN STONES.—Holes in stone-work may be stopped with shellac and powdered stone. Beat up some of the same kind of stone you wish to fill up, to a fine powder, mix it with the shellac; before filling brush the holes out with liquid shellac; fill the holes a little more than even or flush with the surface, so as to leave some to be rubbed off, it is always best to have them too full than not full enough.

TOUGHENING WOOD.—It is claimed that by a new process white wood can be made so tough as to require a coldchisel to split it. This result is obtained by steaming the timber and submitting it to end pressure, technically "upsetting" it, thus compressing cells and fibres into one compact mass. It is the opinion of those who have experimented with the process that wood can be compressed seventy-five per cent., and that some timber which is now considered unfit for use in such work as carriage building could be made valuable by this means.

THE PHONOGRAPH.—It is still hoped to make the phonograph practically useful in reporting speeches, Court proceedings, debates, etc. The principal difficulty now remaining is to secure the distinction of tone in voice so that the various speakers may be recognized by the transcriber. When this is accomplished one of the machines may be taken into Court and all the proceedings will be recorded by it. At the close of the day it can be carried to a room and ganged to talk at any rate of speed—at thirty words a minute, for instance, which can be written out by an ordinary long-hand writer.

Farm and Garden.

WHITEWASH.—To make whitewash that will not rub off, add a little white glue.

TIMBER.—Some timber is more durable in wet ground or immersed in water; such are elm, beech, and alder. Others, such as ash, oak, and fir, are more durable in dry situations.

TO RESTORE FADED FLOWERS.—If changing the water does not revive them, place them in boiling water up to about one-third of the stem; by the time the water has got cold the flowers will look quite fresh again. Cut off the ends and put them in clean cool water.

THE COLD RAINS.—The cold drizzling fall rains are far more injurious to stock than the frosts of winter. If the cattle ever need protection, it is when these cold rains come. To say nothing of the cruelty of the act, it is bad policy to permit cows or other animals to suffer for want of food and shelter. Any loss in this way, in the fall of the year, puts the animal in so much worse condition for wintering.

MILK.—To secure an abundance of milk the stables must be warm. Cows crowded in the stables keep one another warm, but the air often becomes foul, and close stables and bad air have a bad effect upon the cows, though their general health may apparently not be affected, yet the milk will have less of good flavor, if not a positive taint. The milk, however, gets a taint at the time it is drawn, especially if milked into open pails, as is usually done.

IN DRIVING.—A cow in milk should never be driven faster than a walk. Good cows have large and well-filled udders, which cause pain to them if they are hurried or driven in a run, as by a careless boy or a dog. Besides, there is danger of overheating the blood and milk, thus greatly injuring it, and rendering it unwholesome. The companion of the "cow boy" is his dog. Every owner of cows should understand that dogs excite and worry cows, and this ought to teach him that dogs should never be allowed to come near them.

There is a very remarkable custom common among the natives of some of the islands in the South Pacific. It may be described as follows:—If A injures B, B burns down C's hut, or makes a hole in his canoe, or sticks a spear in the pathway so that C is nearly sure to run against it. B lets C know that he has injured him, and the reason of it; when C is expected to settle the account with A, the first aggressor.

"I HAVE gained three pounds in one day," said Robinson. "How do you account for that?" "Effect of the climate. I have put on all my heavy clothes."

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TO FRIENDS AND READERS.

We hope that those of our friends and readers who are kindly in the habit of getting up clubs for THE POST, will enter the field as soon as possible this year and try to at least double their old lists. We are hoping to get a great many large sized clubs for the coming year, and trust every one of our present subscribers will make an extra effort to secure one or more new friends for us.

THE POST is much lower in price than any other first class family paper in the country, and we think it only needs to be laid before the community to be subscribed for at once by thousands to whom it may still be a stranger, save, perhaps, by reputation. Of course we must depend in a great degree upon our present subscribers, friends and readers to show THE POST to their acquaintances and neighbors, and to speak a good word in our behalf. Their return for such efforts must be the pleasure they give to others, the consciousness of assisting in the good work of circulating THE POST, and enabling us to make it better, more useful and entertaining than ever before. Will they try and do it for us? Let each of our present friends and subscribers try to get one new subscriber at least.

Sample copies for the purpose will be sent to those who wish them.

Fault-Finding.

There is an art of "putting things," that should be studied by everyone who desires to get through life usefully and pleasantly. How many quarrels would be avoided if we could always say with courtesy and tact any unpleasant thing that may have to be said. It is related of a good-humored celebrity that when a man once stood before him and his friend at the theatre, completely shutting out all view of the stage, instead of asking him to sit down, or in any way giving offence, he simply said: "I beg your pardon, sir, but when you see or hear anything particularly interesting on the stage, will you please let us know, as we are entirely dependent on your kindness?" That was sufficient. With a smile, and an apology that only the art of putting things could have extracted, the gentleman took his seat.

At no time is this art of putting things more useful than when we have to find fault, which is a very difficult thing to do well. We all have to find fault at times, in reference to servants, children, husband or wife, but in a great number of cases the operation loses half of its effect, or has no effect at all, perhaps a downright bad effect, because of the way in which it is done.

What makes it so difficult to find fault well is obvious. We have to do a thing which is almost certain to be disagreeable to the person we do it to. How is this difficulty to be overcome? The first caution that may be suggested is never to find fault when out of temper. In numberless instances reproof is rendered ineffectual, not by its severity, nor simply by its natural unwelcomeness, but by the manifest heat or irritation with which it is accompanied. It may be very hard to help it, but it is certain that, as a rule, we shall find fault in vain when we fail to keep our temper. If the temper is wrong the time is sure to be wrong also. Better put off till to-morrow the reproof that would be given in bad temper to day.

"Let a man," says Seneca, "consider his own vices, reflect upon his own follies, and he will see that he has the greatest reason to be angry with himself." The best advice to give husband and wife, and all who live in close intimacy, is to ask them to resolve, in the words of Shakspeare: "I will chide no breather in the world but myself, against whom I know most faults."

Thus it is that by an impartial survey of our own characters, our disappointment in our friends may be moderated, and our love, so far from declining, may acquire additional tenderness from the consciousness that there is room for mutual forbearance and sympathy of others, and, in affectionate and sensible natures, tends to produce the closest unions.

We sometimes form unreasonable expectations and make unreasonable complaints respecting people because we do not sufficiently take into consideration this truth—that all good intellectual and moral qualities cannot exist in the same character, but that precisely as we have much of any one quality in any character, so must we look for a deficiency of some other. Instead of doing this, when disposed to condemn any one near us for a particular prevailing fault of character, we should consider if he could have been fairly expected, with his good qualities, to have been altogether free from the noxious fault.

Every creature is after his or her kind. Surliness and honesty are, for example, sometimes found togethe. When we find such a case and experience the benefit of the honesty, let us ascertain, before condemning the surliness, if it be not in fact an essential element of the character of the individual, which could not have been absent without the other also.

Do we, again, appreciate the benign nature of someone associated with us, but feel disposed to find fault because it is attended by a want of vigor and activity; let us ask ourselves whether we could reasonably expect two good qualities so opposite to each other to be largely developed in the same person. By taking this calm, philosophic view of the faults of our friends we shall greatly increase our peace of mind.

"Fret not thyself," is the sensible advice of the Psalmist. There are those who fret alone, whom no one can cheer, who brood over their wrongs, over things that go wrong, till their face always lives in shadow, and who claim with infinite impertinence that they are unselfish because they do not complain in words; as if their selfishness were not more hopeless than that of the open complainer. The latter, at least, gets rid of his temper in words; the other nurses it. There are others who are always forecasting evil, who allow small cares and troubles to overwhelm them with fear and hopelessness, and who drag life after them like an over-weighted cart.

Self is the shadow that darkens our lives and prevents us from being bright companions. Occupied with the thought of our own unhappiness, we cannot think, as we ought, of the welfare of others, and so we become a cloud on their sunshine.

The great secret of cheerfulness is not to be absorbed in ourselves. We must be sweet and sunny, because we wish others to be happy and satisfied. Never forget that "smiling in thy brother's face is charity."

IN our earnest and eager pursuit the main ends for which we live—the acquisition of knowledge, the making of money, the conquest of fame or power, the meeting of the varied demands of our station in life—we are apt to overlook the importance to ourselves and those around us of a disinterested and habitual courtesy. There is a magnetism in a cordial and sunny manner, that all feel who come within the circle of its power, and though this subtle element is not inherent in all natures, it may be cultivated by every one. True courtesy springs from the heart, and has its source in a genuine desire to promote the happiness of others; and by so much as we ourselves feel the need of gracious words and kindly tones from those around us, by so much should we extend the gentle charities of social intercourse to them. Against anger in our neighbor we may fortify ourselves; we may oppose indifference to selfishness, and enmity to enmity; but who can withstand the daily musketry of genial manners, of pleasant tones, of courteous words. In the family more than anywhere else should these graces of social intercourse be cultivated, since here individuals are brought in closest and continual contact.

ACUTE sensibilities are intended as a direct means of inspiring generous impulses and cultivating a benevolent character. To him who is always sensitive for others as well as for himself they are not a torment but a blessing. The pleasure and pain he feels and the sources to which he traces each are his contrual guides to show him how to diffuse the one and to mitigate the other in his intercourse with mankind. Nothing is more selfish than a narrow, self-pitying sensitiveness, nothing more ennobling than a sensitive spirit keenly alive to all good and kindly influences.

THERE are three things to which man is born—labor and sorrow and joy. Each of these three things has its baseness and its nobleness. There is base labor and noble labor; there is base sorrow and noble sorrow; there is base joy and noble joy. But you must not think to avoid the corruption of these things by doing without the things themselves. Nor can any life be right that has not all three. Labor without joy is base; labor without sorrow is base; sorrow without labor is base; joy without labor is base.

NO cowardice is so great as that found in want of truth. Belief in the rightness of a cause, in the value of a high moral standard, in the supreme righteousness overruling man, self respect and moral dignity—all go by the board when we condescend to a lie, either spoken or acted, either by suggestion of the false or suppression of the truth. Whatever it may be that we are called on to testify or acknowledge we should stand to openly and without wincing.

THERE is no just action, no kind word, no obliging demeanor, no charity, no hospitality, that springs from selfishness which shall not have its penalty, inasmuch as it corrupts the character; and there is no kindness, no forbearance, no generosity, no charity, that springs from disinterested benevolence, which has not its remuneration, for it makes men better, nobler and purer.

THE experience of life, and the words of those men whom the world calls great and learned, teach us the dignity of labor and the value of close application to whatever work we wish to finish successfully. Nothing great can be accomplished without labor. Genius and talent may accomplish much, but labor is the lever that moves the world. There is no other road to success in science or in trade.

LOVE of novelty, seeking without due cause, to upset prevailing usages, is no benefaction to the community. The usages have been established by long experience and by common consent, and not until they can be shown to interfere with some real good should they be disturbed.

DIRECTLY any one thinks himself heroic the last trace of heroism has vanished from him, for the very essence of heroism is that self is forgotten in something outside of self.

OPINIONS alter, manners change, creeds rise and fall, but the moral law is written on tablets of eternity.

INDEPENDENCE and self respect are essential to happiness, and these are never to be attained together without work.

IMITATION and sham in any character are but synonyms for weakness.

The World's Happenings.

The Mexican army has 160,923 soldiers.

A servant girl in Cincinnati has fallen heir to $250,000.

A Connecticutter has invented a mast that bends to the gale.

An old sexton at Rockford, Ill., dropped dead while digging a grave.

A perfect, well chicken, killed in Terrell, Ga., had 18 pins in its gizzard.

Twenty-one Indians voted in Alger county, Mich., at the last election.

A pug on the end of a stick is the latest thing in the way of a cigarette holder.

An Indian named Kills-Enemy-at-Night is waiting trial for murder at Deadwood.

Meyerbeer, the composer, could whistle "Yankee Doodle" at 3 years of age.

A Helena, Mon., man offers to bet $100 that he can live for three months on hay and oats.

Archdeacon Farrar says that "in India the English have made 100 drunkards for one Christian."

During last season 20,000 bushels of onions were raised on one farm in Warren county, New Jersey.

In a Pullman car that arrived in San Bernardino, Cal., the other day, there were seventeen babies.

A Louisiana judge decides that a man who loses money at poker may recover from the man who sells him the chips.

Governor Scales, of North Carolina, has received $600,000 in Confederate bonds from England, which were deposited there in 1864.

The forests of Spain have been so cut away that they cannot furnish ties for railroads. One road has just been supplied by a New York firm.

It was in 1814 that Seth Thompson, of East Bridgewater, Mass., took unto himself a wife, and the couple still live together in a serene old age.

It is now contended that yellow fever is not transmitted through the air nor by contact, but by inoculation, which is largely performed by mosquitoes.

The Chinamen of Newark, N. J., have in mass meeting declared their anxiety to become American citizens and secure the full protection of the laws.

The Marquis de Mores, the millionaire cowboy of Montana, has leased a house in New York for four months, paying $24,000 for rent of house and furniture.

Even such a blase man as the Prince of Wales can enjoy a new sensation. H. R. H. has recently smoked a cigarette made of tobacco grown in England.

Manuel Barrient and wife, of Matamoras, Mexico, celebrated the eightieth anniversary of their marriage a few days ago. The husband is 102 years old and the wife 96.

The exclusive right of selling opium on the Isthmus of Panama has been purchased by a Chinaman for $16,000. The government will use the money in reducing the national debt.

A bill to be brought forward in the Connecticut Legislature this winter exempts "poodles weighing less than 10 pounds" from taxation. The same bill was defeated a couple of years ago.

The reduction of fares to five cents at all hours and on all lines of elevated roads in New York is said to have brought the companies more business than they have facilities for properly handling.

Nearly all of the persons said to be over 100 years of age are negroes. This is very suspicious. A Southern editor saw a negro some years ago who remembered well when Columbus discovered America.

Mrs. John C. Miller, of Keysville, Mo., has a ship biscuit which, it is said, was brought from England in 1630, and which has been handed down from generation to generation. It is kept in a glass bottle and is as hard as a stone.

A man, whose name would have been good on a check for $2,000,000 not long ago, spent two hours in the back office of a Wall street broker, one day recently, waiting to get the chance to borrow $10 from one who used to be his clerk.

It is said that the lazy Sultan of Morocco has the most luxuriant tricycle in the world. He sits cross-legged upon an embossed couch, curtained and canopied with silk and silver and gold, while the machine is being propelled by slave power.

Pickney Robertson, a bright mulatto, who, during the reconstruction days in South Carolina, was a power in politics there, and while lobbying at the State Capital held four different clerkships, each one paying him $6 a day, is now a porter in Atlanta at $4 a week.

A pastor in a State adjoining this, preaching from the text, "Beware of Covetousness," said: "Last Sunday night the collection in this house amounted to $1.80, and the dollar was thrown in by a Baptist brother from Richmond, Va., who happened to be here and did not know any better. The other 600 of you dropped in the 80 cents.

Those who bear in mind the manœuvres of the masses of Frenchmen and Germans round about Metz sixteen years ago will be able also to recall the name of Thionville, not many miles from the fortress. At Thionville the other day a little lad at play came across a rusty shell that had lain unseen since 1870. The boy handled the shell with curiosity. When finally he cast it back to the ground the missile exploded, and the poor little fellow was slain instantly.

A hanging scene is one of the thrilling features of a drama at the Fashion Theatre, in San Antonia, Texas, and a concealed rope is placed around the body of the man who acts the part of the victim to keep the strain off the noose around his neck. The concealed rope failed to connect the other night, and the man, after a realistic hanging scene, was cut down for dead. The Coroner was summoned, but by hard work the man was restored to consciousness.

IN SORROW.

BY S. J.

Sadly you ask, "Is it all in vain
That we struggle and rise and fall again—
That we do our best when our lot is hard
And our work is held in light regard,
When those who might help us and lessen our load
Are waiking at ease on a smoother road,
And, though the earth is so broad and fair,
It hath no bounty for us to share?"

Often, I know, will the question rise,
As the tears come fast into wearied eyes,
"Is there none to care or to sooth my pain?
Do I live and suffer and strive in vain?"
And the answer cometh, "No; for the end
To which these long sad journeys tend
Is a haven of calm, is a home of rest
That shall fully repay the weary quest.

"All we have hoped for there shall be known;
There is the harvest of good seed sown,
Peace for the anxious whose plans were crost,
Love for the lonely on earth long lost.
Joy that will never take flight again
Shall gladden us after Life's sharp pain."
Lord may we struggle and hope and ascend
With courage and faith to attain this end!

'When Lilies Blow."

BY A. A. LEWIS.

SHE was "sole daughter of his house and heart," Elgitha Rowena A'Beckett. A peculiar name hers was. But her father, John Kestrel A'Beckett, Esq., of Beckett Court, Twickenham, and Birchin Court, City, had bestowed his daughter's name upon her at her baptism, and no man had gainsaid him.

Few men indeed there were who would attempt to gainsay what John Kestrel A'-Beckett proposed. He was accustomed to be obeyed, not argued with, he frequently informed his dependants.

He may have selected the appellation for his heiress in order that her name, living in the history of England in ages to come, might be a connecting link between the period of the Saxon Chronicle and the year A.D. 2000.

"For," John Kestrel A'Beckett said grandiloquently, "with inherited talent—ahem!—with highest culture, and all the advantages of wealth and station, who shall limit the possibilities of my daughter's career?"

"Of course, Mr. A'Beckett," his wife said timidly; "but I wish the child wasn't so thin, and that she could eat her mutton-chop at luncheon."

This disability, which weighed heavily on Mrs. A'Beckett's commonplace mind, increased as the years rolled on and poor little thin pale-faced Elgitha Rowena was growing older.

She had the highest culture that any number of the very best highly-cultured masters and governesses could give her. She had all the advantages of being splendidly dressed and splendidly lodged and fed and waited upon, of being bowed down to and fittered and caressed by toadying relatives and acquaintances.

She spoke five languages, was a proficient in thorough-bass, quadratic equations, had sustained cross-examinations in early English poetry, geology, and Ganot's physics without flinching, had modelled in plaster and been modelled herself and rendered in marble.

She had painted in oil and water colors, and was the subject of a charming classical composition picture—"A Saxon Maiden at Study."

"My daughter is eighteen," mused Mr. A'Beckett pompously.

"Yes, indeed, poor dear—at seven o'clock next Thursday morning," said her mother.

"What are you talking about?" he demanded sternly. "My daughter is eighteen I say. It is time I thought of a suitable alliance for my child—suitable alliance—yes! And I believe I shall not have much difficulty. I have a suitable alliance decided upon, Mrs. A'Beckett. My child wants nothing but a title—a—a coronet, Mrs. A'-Beckett—the coronet of a viscountess!"

"Oh, Mr. A'Beckett!" his wife exclaimed, flushed and smiling.

"And she shall have it, madam!" declared Mr. A'Beckett, with calm decision. "I do not think my friend Viscount Clydesdale will object."

"Oh, gracious goodness," gasped Mrs. A'Beckett, "he's—he's very old! Isn't he rather elderly for her, poor child?"

"What are you talking about, madam?" demanded her husband again, with pompous severity. "Do you forget that my friend Clydesdale has a son—the Honorable Robert? I don't think Viscount Clydesdale will object to his son's marrying the heiress and only child of John Kestrel A'-Beckett! No one is to know of this intention of mine from you, if you please," he continued.

And Mrs. A'Beckett never dreamed of attempting to disobey him.

She was a little haughtier to her maid and more patronizing to her acquaintances in consequence of this vision of a future coronet, but that was all.

Mr. A'Beckett had called Viscount Clydesdale his friend; and such friendship that can exist between a proud and selfish man and a man whom he considers infinitely beneath him, and to whom he is deeply indebted, undoubtedly did exist between them.

The Viscount visited very frequently at Beckett Court, and asked John A'Beckett frequently to dine at his club or his chambers. He had elegantly-furnished rooms in Pall Mall.

His lordship had been a gay widower for many years; he had married so early and his wife had died so early that he would have altogether forgotten his brief matrimonial experience if he had not been reminded of it by the existence of his son.

Lord Clydesdale had frequently borrowed money from John A'Beckett—but for the help which the millionaire of the City banking-house and the Stock Exchange had afforded him, the last remnants of the Clydesdale estate and the Lodge, a ruinous mansion somewhere in Berwickshire, would have long since fallen into Israelitish clutches.

Mr. A'Beckett's help had been timely and generous; and he continued his generous dealing in other directions until Lord Clydesdale found himself poor certainly, but his affairs in comfortable order, his property being well rented and carefully managed, at fifty-three, free from debt and a great deal better off than he had ever been in all his life.

He resolved to make his wealthy friend a suitable return some day—he did not quite know how; and his wealthy friend resolved that he should, determining in his own mind what that reward should be.

And, when Lord Clydesdale learned what his friend had expected from him, he was neither astonished nor displeased.

"It was like Beckett's impudence," his lordship said, smiling cynically, whilst he flicked off the white ash off the choice cigar he was smoking. "The idea of his girl married to my boy! Miss Beckett, Lady Clydesdale! Good heavens! But, if Bob doesn't object, I shall not—the girl will have ten thousand a year, I dare say. No—I shall certainly not object to bestow the family diamonds—horribly in want of resetting they are!—on Miss Beckett in return for ten thousand a year."

Lord Clydesdale dropped the prefix to his friend's name very often.

He sneered at "A'Beckett" very openly, seeing that the grandfather and the father of the present holder of the name had been City tradesmen, and each had been plain "John Beckett, wholesale tea-dealer and importer."

"For a shrewd-headed fellow such as Beckett really is, his childish vanity and self-importance are something quite refreshing!" laughed his lordship. "He keeps me often in perpetual wonderment as to which side of him, fool or knave, is uppermost."

"Knave?" repeated the person to whom he was speaking, who was none other than his lordship's only son and heir, the Honorable Robert Clydesdale, then just returned from an exploring and hunting expedition in Russia—the Honorable Robert was always traveling, and stayed with his affectionate father for a brief space only once in two years or thereabouts.

"My dear boy," said his father leisurely, "we all partake of the fool and the knave, only some are more largely endowed in one respect than the other."

"Indeed!" the son rejoined. "And pray of which side of the parental character does Miss Beckett partake most?"

"Don't be cynical, Bob," said his lordship, laughing heartily; "and don't call poor Beckett's treasure—his 'heiress,' as he styles her perpetually—hard names until you see her. I have made no promises on your behalf, not one. Still her dowry would bring back the old Cumberland property, lost to us these thirty years, Robert, my boy. But my son's inclinations are to be his guide, and by them I shall stand. So I said to Beckett. Your inclinations and your happiness above every consideration on earth, my boy!" added Lord Clydesdale, pathetically.

"Yes, father, I know," the young man returned, his scornful lips softening, and his bright blue eyes resting affectionately on his father's grizzled hair and refined pale face; "but, for my part, I cannot think how you can tolerate the idea of such an alliance," he went on angrily, but laughing at the same time. "Upon my word, father, it is too much of a good thing! If I had known what was waiting for me, I would have stayed on the other side of the Caucasus, or brought you home some rich California belle from San Francisco as your daughter-in-law!"

"Beckett's heiress will have as much as the California belle, is highly educated, and has been brought up with ideas of English etiquette and of the laws of society, I believe," Lord Clydesdale said gravely, his thin patrician face darkening with a flush at his son's taunting words.

He was very proud; but he was growing an old man, and was a fanciful valetudinarian, though he was scarcely fifty-three, and he yearned for ease and luxuries and indulgences of all kinds—all that money could give, now, when the limits of his enjoyments were growing narrower. Beckett's money would restore the Cumberland estates and the Scottish Lodge, and surround the Clydesdale name with the prestige it had lacked for nearly half a century—the prestige of wealth.

Lord Clydesdale could not forget all this, nor suffer his son to forget it either.

"Where do those people live?" the Honorable Robert asked of his father abruptly on the afternoon succeeding the day of his return, when his father had unfolded his wishes to him.

"Beckett has a splendid place near Twickenham." Lord Clydesdale replied, regarding his son curiously, "a very fine old house fitted up in the old baronial style—tapestry, carved oak, Wardour-Street suits of armor, stags' antlers from his Scottish friends, sideboards piled up with massive plate—something worth going to see, in fact. Why, Bob?"

"Because I'll go down there to-day and get it over," replied the Honorable Robert coolly, flicking the ash off his cigar—"get it done 'slick off,' as they say in California."

"Get what done?" inquired his father, a smile struggling over his features.

"Why, the heiress, of course! What else am I going for?" the son demanded. "I am going down to see Mr. Beckett and his heiress, and arrange terms of exchange and barter."

"Not—not unless you feel inclined, Robert," the father protested, his smile fading and an uneasy expression making his finely-chiselled features look old and feeble and selfish. "I believe she is a very nice sort of girl." The words were hardly audible as Lord Clydesdale caught the quick sharp glance of his son's steel-blue eyes.

"It doesn't matter a fig whether she is nice or not," he said sharply; "she has been well educated, you say, and has learned enough of the usages of society to make her debut decently, I dare say. She will be as nice as rich men's daughters generally are, be sweetly civil over the prospect of being the future Lady Clydesdale, and I am not going to seek her expecting anything more. She will have her own way when she is my wife, and I trust she may be happy. Good-bye, father. I'll report progress to-morrow at breakfast or luncheon."

"Why, Robert, you—you're not going now, this minute, are you? My dear boy, your dress! I think, if you would——"

"Excuse me, sir," the son interrupted; "but I mean to give Miss Beckett a chance. She may not be fascinated with me in this rough coat and colored shirt—if so, so much the better for her—and I may be less in keeping with that old baronial style in this suit."

And in this mood Robert Clydesdale went a wooing, with something very like contempt for himself, something stronger than contempt for his intended father-in-law, cold aversion in his heart for the woman whose golden dowry was to be his purchase-money.

Bitter thoughts surged within him at every yard of the road he traversed. Once or twice he almost resolved to turn back; but, having spoken of his intention, he persevered doggedly, and in the dust of a sultry June afternoon he drove up to the gates of Beckett Court, and learned from a liveried menial who regarded him superciliously that Mr. A'Beckett was not home, but that Mrs. and Miss A'Beckett were.

At the hall door a second liveried retainer gave Mr. Clydesdale the same information more doubtfully.

"I can wait if they are out," remarked Mr. Clydesdale, coolly handing his card to the footman, when a change came over the spirit of John Thomas immediately.

"Please to step into the library, sir," he said, deferentially. "I will inquire if the ladies have returned from their drive. I rather think they have, sir."

He conducted him across the wide vestibule into a splendid room lighted by narrow casements of stained glass, the warm tints of which glimmered in gold and green and amethyst on the dark carved book-cases, the rows of richly-bound volumes, the dark crimson velvety carpet and the massive oak furniture.

"How I should like to see the poor old library at Clydesdale Manor restored like this room!" Robert Clydesdale thought, with an envious sigh.

He threw himself back in one of the great Russia-leather chairs with gold crest and monogram on the crimson back, and, with something like cynical dismay creeping over him, eyed the portentous collection of books—English and foreign—and the great writing-table.

"That's where the heiress studies, surrounded by her polite masters and governesses, I suppose," he muttered. "The dad said he understood she was a linguist, besides being otherwise accomplished. Good gracious! What a blessed look-out for me! She will ask me to explain some difficult passage in Æschylus perhaps," he thought, with a sneer; "and, when I say I don't know Greek sufficiently well, she will kindly translate it for me, or, compassionating my ignorance, come down to modern classics, and put me through my paces in Schiller, or Corneille, or Anglo-Saxon poetry. I'll tell her that I know nothing, to begin with, that I can't do much more than write my own letters and read my own newspaper; and so I may escape. Confound it all!"

There was anything but a winning smile on his countenance as he heard the door open.

"Mrs. A'Beckett went out driving an hour since, sir, but will be back to dinner, her maid says," John Thomas announced; "and Miss A'Beckett is, I think, somewhere in the grounds with some friends, sir."

The footman paused doubtfully.

"Confound it!" muttered Robert Clydesdale savagely between his teeth. "To come down all this way to get it over quietly, and to be balked! I shall wait to see Miss A'Beckett, if she returns in half an hour," he said aloud; and the footman withdrew.

Left alone in the library, he repented of his resolution. The sombre room felt oppressive in the warmth of the summer afternoon. His footsteps fell noiselessly on the thick carpet, his very voice, when he spoke aloud in his irritation, seemed muffled by the heavy velvet drapery of the windows. The view even through the windows extended no farther than a strip of perfectly-mown sward dotted with three well-kept flower-beds, and a beautifully trim close-cut beech-hedge beyond.

"The people are just like this," he thought—"prim, wealthy, respectable, with no idea freer or fresher than the air of this room, with its insufferable curtains!"

He walked over to the window nearest to him—it had rather a better view than the others—determined to fling it wide open. A low velvet-covered chair was placed half across it, and, as he dragged back the curtains, he saw that some one had converted the chair into a couch—some one crouching snugly on a cushion behind the curtains—a girl with her head laid on her arm, which rested on the chair-seat. A volume of fairy-tales was in her other hand, open at the story of the Sleeping Beauty, and a big black cat was in her lap—cat and girl both fast asleep.

"Who on earth can she be?" Robert Clydesdale thought, amused. "Poor child, the learned sanctum hasn't awed her much, with her cat and her fairy-tales—a delicate-looking sorrowful little thing—the housekeeper's daughter, I shouldn't wonder, judging by her dress, or some visitor perhaps—somebody who comes to partake of the heiress's bounty—a poor young cousin, or some one like that."

He took the book from the little unclosed hand and glanced at the story, then glanced back again at the pale, gentle, sleeping face upturned against the background of dark velvet drapery.

She was not a pretty girl by any means—if anything, she was plain-looking, sad-looking, with thin undeveloped figure, clad in a homely brown linen dress; but there were purity an innocence in the face.

Robert Clydesdale stood looking at the girl and glancing at the story of the fair one who slept until the charmed kiss awoke her.

The summer breeze wafted a lock of her light brown hair across her thin, blue-veined temples, and she stirred uneasily. Robert Clydesdale stooped down and softly put back the hair.

Suddenly the door of the library opened, and Robert Clydesdale, raising himself, drew the curtain as it was before, and moved away with a tinge of red flushing his brown cheeks.

"Can it be possible that I have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Robert Clydesdale?" a lady exclaimed, entering the apartment with a mighty rustling of silk, the splendid superabundance of which extended in glistening folds far behind her. "Mr. Clydesdale—dear Lord Clydesdale's son—this is a pleasure!"

The lady spoke very affectedly and had a vulgar intonation; but she was superbly attired. She was a rather good-looking woman between thirty-five and forty.

"Good gracious," Robert thought, "this can't be the daughter, surely! This woman is over thirty; she's rouged, and—good gracious this can't be Miss A'Beckett!"

"I am Mrs. A'Beckett," the lady said simperingly. "I have not had the pleasure of meeting you before."

"Oh, ah—yes, to be sure!" Robert responded somewhat relieved, but still most unfavorably impressed by Mrs. A'Beckett's manner, her overdressed appearance, her voice, and everything about her.

"I hope she won't discover that poor little thing sleeping in the window," he thought nervously. "She looks a coarse-minded sort of person who could scold well, for all her finery."

And, to prevent the discovery, he led Mrs. A'Beckett to the farther side of the room.

"Of course you'll stay and dine with us, Mr. Clydesdale?" Mrs. A'Beckett said as she seated herself and twitched at her laces and arranged her bracelets. "Mr. A'Beckett will be so delighted, and—and my daughter. You haven't met my daughter, Mr. Clydesdale?"

She looked at him consciously, and Mr. Robert Clydesdale frowned involuntarily.

"She knows of course; she's taking stock of me," he thought irately. "Well, let her." Aloud he said politely, "No, I have not had that pleasure."

"I shall ring for her maid, then, to tell her that I want her," smiled Mrs. A'Beckett.

But when that personage, a very sharp-looking, well-dressed damsel, appeared, she informed her mistress that Miss A'Beckett had gone out into the grounds two hours before, and she had been looking for her in vain.

"Piresome pet she is!" simpered the lady—but she looked exceedingly cross. "Look for Miss A'Beckett again, please, Wilkinson, and tell her I want her." Then, turning to young Clydesdale, she said: "You must have some luncheon now; we don't dine until half-past seven."

"I cannot stay to dinner, thank you. I brought no evening dress," he responded.

"Oh, evening dress! How can you talk of such a thing?" cried Mrs. A'Beckett, scanning his dusty gray suit with very critical eyes nevertheless. "We have no dinner-party this evening—we shall be quite a family."

"Dear me," Robert Clydesdale thought scornfully. "I think these people are altogether too grand for a plain man like me. I had better petition to be let sit in the housekeeper's room, and talk to that child with the fairy-tales—I should like it much better!"

He had cast several nervous glances at the distant window whilst Mrs. A'Beckett spoke to him, and acceded to that lady's request that he would come into the dining-room to luncheon, more for the purpose of leaving the coast clear for the escape of the poor little stowaway—he was certain she was the niece or daughter of the housekeeper—than from any desire to partake of the hospitality of Beckett Court.

Mrs. A'Beckett excused herself to him presently, and retired with an anxious brow; and Robert Clydesdale, having read and lounged about and yawned through two hours more, was at length relieved by the entrance of the master of Beckett Court in person.

Having, by way of preparation for dinner, washed his face and hands and brushed his curly golden-brown hair, Mr. Clydesdale descended to the drawing-room, almost abashed, hardened young man as he was

in matters of costume, by the display of evening-dress on the persons of his host and hostess. Even a subdued-looking elderly lady who he felt sure was the governess or duenna was quite glittering in jet ornaments and gray silk.

Robert almost closed his eyes, prepared to be blinded by the dazzling vision of the heiress, when he heard the words, "My daughter—Mr. Clydesdale," but opened them very quickly, and as widely as possible, when a small slender figure dressed in pale blue curtseyed silently.

It was "the housekeeper's daughter," the girl with the cat and the fairy tales! The wonderful heiress whose dower was double that of many a princess, the only child of John Kestrel A'Beckett, was a shy, plain, delicate-looking girl apparently about seventeen, a cowed, silent creature, with stiff manners and a habit of looking frightened when addressed.

"She looked ten times better in her holland frock, poor child," Robert Clydesdale thought pityingly.

She hardly spoke during dinner, and once, when he ventured to address her, she reddened painfully, and answered him in the briefest manner.

"That poor child has no willing part in the bargain her parents are making for her," he told himself, and his heart softened to her at the thought.

As the evening went on, when poor Elgitha Rowena was asked by her father to play and sing for Mr. Clydesdale, which she did in a mechanical, lifeless style, her weak but sweet voice trilling little drawing-room melodies like a timid robin, more and more afraid of Mr. Clydesdale did she seem. In fact, he perceived plainly, in spite of a certain effort to treat him politely, that her feelings towards him were those of fear and dislike.

* * * * *

"Well, how did you like her—like them all?" Lord Clydesdale asked of his son with a faint pretence at indifference in his manner.

"I did not like them at all," replied his son curtly. "I never saw worse specimens of the genus parvenu. As for the daughter, she is more to be pitied than disliked, poor child! The grandeur of her father and mother seems to crush her. I honestly believe the girl is pretty nearly educated and drilled and dressed and fussed out of her life."

"Dear, dear," exclaimed Lord Clydesdale smiling and elevating his brows—"that never struck me! I haven't seen her—Elgitha, I believe, is her name—for some time; I thought her a nice quiet little creature."

"Very quiet," agreed his son sarcastically. "I think she spoke three sentences at dinner, two during the evening, and two the next morning."

"Oh, come, Robert; that is an excellent fault—a quiet tongue," Lord Clydesdale laughed.

"You would not admire it in the women of our set, sir," retorted the young man coldly. "However, I don't object to it in my wife; and, if Elgitha—powers of earth and air, what a name!—doesn't mope or starve herself to death during the course of the next year or so, I am ready to marry her if she doesn't detest me too much."

"Detest you! She?" queried Lord Clydesdale.

"Yes; she detests me to a certain degree now, I know," replied his son quietly; "and I think the better of her for it."

And so it was arranged on the occasion of Robert Clydesdale's second visit to Beckett Court. His father accompanied him, as in etiquette bound; and when the two parents had discussed the matter to their perfect satisfaction in the library, Robert was called in and informed that Mr. A'Beckett had given his assent to the proposal which Lord Clydesdale had made on behalf of his son, and at the expiry of two years Mr. A'Beckett would consent to the marriage of his daughter Elgitha Rowena with the Honorable Robert Clydesdale.

"Provided they both be willing," added Mr. A'Beckett with a smile that showed all his teeth.

"As yet I have had no means of discovering what place I hold in Miss A'Beckett's estimation," said Robert. "I suppose I must trust to time to win her deeper regard."

"Certainly," rejoined Mr. A'Beckett with another smile. "She is but a child in feelings yet, and merely acquiesces in what her parents assure her is for her good."

"I have no doubt of that," said Robert frigidly; and when he quitted the conference, he told himself bitterly, "My father and myself are acting a sufficiently unworthy part in this bargaining, but the loving parent who is deliberately selling that helpless child, for the prospect of an empty title, and barren honors, to a man of whose character he is absolutely ignorant, can be nothing better than a selfish tyrant, whatever he may appear to be. That unfortunate little heiress has a miserable life of it, and, whether I am to marry her or not, I will try to befriend her," and he was as good as his word.

Though Robert Clydesdale's style of wooing was peculiar, it possessed at least the advantage of suiting perfectly both the persons concerned, though not quite at first.

There were days when Robert, having to "do duty," as he expressed it, at Beckett Court, after driving down in his own light-built phaeton behind a splendid pair of bays, would request permission from Mrs. A'Beckett to drive out with Elgitha for an hour or two.

That lady would speedily return, ushering in poor Elgitha as if she were a captive maid, richly dressed, and looking very nervous and miserable.

On one memorable occasion, entering alone, she burst into hysterical sobs and tears.

She had evidently been weeping bitterly; and, when Mr. Clydesdale, questioning her as to the cause, insisted kindly on her telling him, even going so far as to attempt to kiss her, though the poor little woe-begone face had little attractiveness in it, she refused angrily, sobbing and stammering in childish rage, and finally crying aloud.

She was still crying, and Robert trying to soothe her, when Mrs. A'Beckett entered the room.

"My dear child, what is the matter?" she exclaimed—and Mr. Clydesdale knew that her surprise was a mere pretence. "She is not very well to-day, poor darling, I fear; she is a little hysterical. Come and have some salvolatile, dearest—do!"

"I think she had better come out into the fresh air with me," said Robert—he felt sure Elgitha was going to be scolded by her affectionate parent.

Elgitha made no reply, but sat with her face buried in her handkerchief.

"Did you hear Mr. Clydesdale, love?" asked her mother, in a rasping tone of voice; and, putting her hand on the girl's shoulder, Robert saw her shake her quietly. "Are you going out with him, or are you not?"

The girl put away her handkerchief and rose sulkily without speaking.

"That's right; come along!" said the young fellow pleasantly; and, when they were safely out of the precincts of Beckett Court, he turned and said to his unhappy little fiancee, sitting beside him, "Look here, Elgitha! First of all, will you let me call you 'Ellie?' It's twice as nice as that other long name. Look here, Ellie—I want you to understand that I never wish you to do anything you don't like to do; and, if you would rather stay at home or—or anything like that, just tell me so quietly, and I'll manage it for you. I want you to be friends with me, child," he added; "and, if you can't be friends with me, say so, and we'll be enemies comfortably—anything so that you are pleased."

Elgitha gave way to a faint little laugh, but said nothing. From that day, however, she made no objection to his company, and they drove or rode out, or walked about the country lanes together in perfect amity, Robert smoking and talking to his dogs, Elgitha staring straight before her in a brown study, or reading from some treasured volume which never appeared at other times.

"That's a volume of fairy tales, isn't it?" he asked once, as they sat in the shadow of some trees. "Capital things they are; I'd like to read them myself."

"Would—would you like to read it now?" asked his fiancee timidly.

"You to read for me? Yes, indeed I should. You go on, Ellie, and I'll smoke," urged Robert.

And Ellie actually, in a pathetic little voice, read the story of the Sleeping Beauty.

"That's very pretty, and you read it very nicely," declared Robert, looking amused. "It's a favorite of yours, I suppose?"

"Yes," Ellie admitted blushing. "I like it so much—she was so pretty; and there is the Prince, and all that."

"Ah, yes—the fairy Prince that won her with a kiss!" laughed Robert. "It's a pity such things can't come true, isn't it, Ellie? Now, if you had a fairy Prince——"

Ellie frowned and reddened angrily, and Robert was obliged to change the subject. But after this she seemed to trust him more, and to prefer his society to that of others.

* * * * *

The two years of Robert Clydesdale engagement with Miss A'Beckett had by no means expired; but in consequence of letters from his father, he returned from Corsica and the Grecian Archipelago, where he had been for the greater part of the winter and early spring, early in April.

"Beckett is annoyed at your continued absence," wrote Lord Clydesdale peevishly; "you have scarcely spent two months in England since last season. I daresay the climate where you are is much more agreeable than this wretched London spring; but still people cannot do exactly as they like, regardless of consequences. There remain three or four months of the time fixed for your engagement; but I really see no reason for the delay; and I am sure you ought not either. Beckett wishes the marriage to take place before the height of the season; therefore, all things considered, I am of opinion you ought to return at once. You can go abroad immediately after the ceremony, you know, and under pleasanter conditions, I should fancy, with a charming young wife. Elgitha has really improved very much—and you will have plenty of money!"

And so in the first weeks of bleak April weather Robert Clydesdale returned to London to be married, and "give up everything," as he bitterly told himself.

For towards poor little Elgitha his feelings had changed in those months of absence.

He had had time to think of his loveless prospective marriage, of his unhappy young fiancee—a girl of whose temper and character he knew nothing—of the gilded slavery of such a lot to both; and a vision of a bright fair face with dark laughing eyes, a fair half-English, half-Italian girl he had met abroad, had caught, his fancy, had almost filled his heart, and shut out the faintest chance of possession from poor plain little Elgitha A'Beckett.

"Elgitha is anxiously expecting you, Robert," Lord Clydesdale remarked, as he and his son sat together in the father's rooms.

"Who said so?" asked the son scornfully. "She used always to look as if she anxiously expected me, I remember!"

"She asked after you very particularly every time I saw her," returned his father rather uneasily. "She has really very much improved. Lady Towers will present her on her marriage. Her father is getting some remarkably fine diamond ornaments for her, and I am having the Clydesdale diamonds reset, Robert."

"Oh, it is going to be at once then!" observed the son, looking up gloomily.

"Whenever you and Elgitha fix the day," answered Lord Clydesdale lightly.

"It is well we are permitted to do even that of our free will!" muttered the son, as he rose and left the room.

"What trouble one's children always are!" muttered the Viscount crossly. "I shouldn't wonder in the least if this good son of mine causes some upset in the business now, when we have arranged everything comfortably! Youngsters are so detestably selfish!"

"Close as they are pushing us, I am determined they shall not force the girl into marriage, at all events," Robert Clydesdale resolved within himself. "It is quite enough for one of us to be acting and knowingly miserable. If she is passively content—well, so be it. Life is not for ever—that is one comfort! Now I wonder is there any possibility of my meeting Ellie alone without her being previously drilled and tortured?" he thought. "I mean to make the girl speak out her mind fully and freely."

"Miss A'Beckett at home?" he asked, after driving down to Beckett Court about eleven o'clock on the following morning.

"Yes, sir," the servant replied.

"I wish to see her at once. Can you take me to the library, and say I wish to see her there?"

"Yes, sir," the man answered, looking rather mystified. "Miss A'Beckett is in the library, I think, if you will allow me to see, sir."

"No; show me in," Robert Clydesdale said shortly.

She was sitting in her favorite window reading, and, as he entered, she stood up startled, gazing for an instant with the old shy irritated look he remembered; then the book fell to the ground, and she sprang towards him, her pale face lit up, and quivering with delight, her color coming and going, her lips parted, her eyes flashing.

"Oh, have you come back?" she cried. And as Robert took her hand and touched her forehead coolly with his lips, he felt instinctively that the poor child yearned for a warmer welcome than that which he had given her.

"Glad to see me, Ellie?" he asked her gently.

"Very!" she replied, her lips quivering more and more, her eyes brimming with tears of glad excitement.

Robert looked at her curiously. She had certainly improved very much in appearance—he could hardly tell how. She was thin and delicate looking still; but there was an indefinable womanly charm in her eyes and about her mouth which he had never noticed before; her figure had grown fuller, she was no longer a child, and there was the grace of a pure, lovable, loving woman in every lineament and change of expression.

"Poor Ellie," he murmured, smiling slightly, and drawing her towards him and kissing her.

A beautiful crimson blush suffused her white neck and her cheeks; bright, passionate gladness filled her eyes with a glowing light as she raised them to his. She murmured something inarticulately, like an overjoyed child, and clung to him in a frantic embrace.

With a shock of remorse and pain came the revelation to Robert Clydesdale that his poor little fiancee had learned to love him with all the first love of her heart.

"After this I have no more to say," he thought sadly. "The foolish little creature has been dreaming or fancying some ideal nonsense about me in my absence, and has conjured up a fairy Prince in Robert Clydesdale!"

"You always speak the truth, Ellie—don't you?" he asked. "I have something to ask you, and I expect your answer to be plain and straightforward, remember."

She nodded her head slightly watching him eagerly whilst he spoke.

"Now—without thinking of anybody but yourself, not what your father and mother or anybody's father and mother wish, but what you yourself wish—tell me the truth. Do you wish to marry me?"

The bright color dyed her face again, her eyes grew dark and lustrous.

"Yes, I do," she answered him falteringly.

"Very well, that is all right then," he said, smothering a heavy sigh. "You used not to wish it, I fancy, Ellie?"

"Oh," she said naively, her lips quivering with glad smiles, "I was so foolish."

"Heaven help you," he muttered, "my way is clear before me now, I suppose. I have only to don the yoke and submit quietly."

Elgitha heard nothing of this flattering aside, and requiring no demonstration of affection from her affianced husband, was not offended at his cold manners or silence. And as the most careless caress or slightest word of his sufficed to bring the glow of happiness to her cheeks, and the love-light to her eyes, Robert told himself that she was perfectly content.

In the meantime the preparations for the marriage were being pushed forward on all sides.

"Don't you think you could take me for better or for worse without seven hundred guineas' worth of apparel, Ellie?" he asked dismally. "That's what your mother told me she has ordered already for you."

"I don't know," she answered, looking bewildered. "Mamma doesn't tell me anything, you know. I always have just what she orders."

"I see," Robert rejoined sardonically. "She orders you to have so many gowns, and she orders you to have a husband, and you take both—dutifully."

Poor Ellie looked up startled; but, seeing a faint smile in his eyes, she laughed in glad unsuspicion, and, venturing a little nearer to him, put her hand on his coat collar, and said bashfully—

"I never think of fashionable things, you know. I don't think I can tell what the fashions are properly. If mamma were not here to get things for me, I should have to be married in my every-day dress. I never could go shopping; I hate it so much, and I am so stupid about things!"

"I wish to goodness then your mamma had gone for a short visit to the North Pole!" remarked Robert. "But for fear of offending her and everybody, I vow I'd have the banns published somewhere, and take you out and marry you in your morning-gown!"

Ellie burst out laughing.

"I should like that so much!" she declared, with almost hysterical merriment.

* * * * *

"The settlements are drawn up, I believe, Robert?" Lord Clydesdale asked the same evening, when his son went back to town. "Very satisfactory, are they not? Everything is very satisfactory, isn't it? We are to be present at the signing of them on Thursday, Beckett told me. By-the-bye, did you notice how bad Beckett is looking, Robert? He is a youngish man—not more than fifty—but he is breaking down; as sure as possible, he is breaking down. I hope things are all right with him."

"What do you mean, father?" Robert asked listlessly.

"Well, nothing in the world I should have said to anybody but you," the Viscount replied mysteriously; "but you ought to know. I have heard queer rumors once or twice about Beckett, Robert—say, nearly six months ago, when I first wanted you to come home. I wish you had done so, and married her, and got everything sure and safe. Every month may tell fatally on the position of a shaky man."

"What on earth are you saying, sir?" Robert cried, in blank amazement. "What is wrong?"

"Nothing, I trust," the Viscount answered sharply; "but I have heard rumors that Beckett is not quite what people think him. He has over-speculated tremendously, and lost something like a hundred thousand this last year. He told me as much himself, and made light of it; but I am not quite satisfied for all that."

"Can it be possible?" Robert ejaculated, a feeling of dismay creeping over him.

He had made up his mind to marry, and felt so certain of his future being decided. It was no joke to lose a splendid fortune or poor little Ellie. He had quite settled in his own mind that she would make a quiet and affectionate little wife, and that in a splendid home they might be very comfortable and live peaceably together. A man could not lose all that without being stunned by the blow. The prospect of his possible liberty did not look so enchanting by contrast, and the vision of the pretty semi-Italian face had faded a little, as he had resolutely set himself to forget it.

"But—but that doesn't release me from my promise to marry his daughter," he said, unconsciously giving utterance to his thoughts.

"What are you talking about?" his father cried sternly. "Release you? It was a fair contract on both sides, I suppose: and, if Beckett could not fulfil his share of it, he would scarcely be mad enough or knave enough to hold you to yours! Marry his daughter without her fortune? Well, hardly! What else are you marrying her for, pray? There are plenty of portionless girls to be had for the asking."

"Be she portionless or not," rejoined Robert Clydesdale very quietly, "my honor remains pledged until the girl herself of her own free will sets me free. She is my affianced wife, I am her affianced husband—fortune or no fortune!"

"I wish to Heaven you wouldn't bother me with your rubbish!" the Viscount said fiercely. "I am worried into an attack of gout about your affairs. I spoke to you of a rumor which I heard. If she has her ten thousand a year secured to her, with reversion to you in case of her death, as we settled, well and good—ay, or half that, if Beckett chose to go back from his first promise; but, without an ample fortune, you are hardly going to make John Beckett's daughter the Viscountess Clydesdale!"

Robert knew of old that argument with his father was useless; so he left him without contradiction, but ordered out his horses and drove down to Beckett Court.

The cold spring had suddenly given place to a bright and warm early summer, and, though it was but in the last week in May, there was on every side on abundance of flowers, of roses and mignonnette, the perfume of which floated on the warm southerly wind, and filled the sunshiny streets. Especially was there a profusion of fragrant lilies of the valley in the moss-adorned baskets of the flower-sellers.

In his softened mood, as he drove along, Robert decided that he would try to make his neglected fiancee very happy that day, that he would talk to her of the future, and try to discover more fully her feelings towards him, and try to be happy himself. Since the ominous conversation with his father, he had thought of her unceasingly with pity—deep, tender pity.

It seemed to him at Beckett Court that something had occurred in the household, though he was ushered into the stately drawing-room by the same stately footman, who departed in the same deferential silence as on former occasions. And, as on many former occasions, it was Mrs. A'Beckett who entered first to welcome him, and not Elgitha. She seemed to Robert always to be exercising perpetual supervision over them both, and satisfying her mind anent doubts and so forth. She was nicely dressed as usual, but a trifle more highly rouged, and not quite so placid and smiling and full of patronising grace.

"I am so glad to see you," she said plaintively, "for I have been really quite worried this morning; and so has Elgitha, poor darling! Mr. A'Beckett has been very ill, and we were both so anxious! But it's nothing—a mere nothing. He is asleep now, and will be quite well in a day or two—a—a little seizure—tendency of blood, you know"—tapping her eyebrows softly—"so Doctor Kitely says. Such a clever man as he is——"

"Was it apoplexy?" asked Robert shortly.

"Oh, dear, no!" Mrs. A'Beckett screamed gently. "Just a little seizure—a giddiness, you know; but we were so startled! It was early this morning, and—no, it was last night; and Elgitha could not sleep all night. She is quite tired out now, and of course I would not allow her to get up, poor darling! So I am afraid you must put up for a few hours with me alone."

"Oh, dear me, not at all!" said Robert, cutting short Mrs. A'Beckett's fascinating smiles. "I will call to-morrow. If you will take those flowers"—a bunch of lilies which he had purchased on the way down—"to her, with my love, I will call to-morrow, Mrs. A'Beckett," he added decisively, making for the door at once, as a tete-a-tete with his mother-in-law-elect as the thing Mr. Clydesdale least relished. "I regret to hear of Mr. A'Beckett's illness. I will call to-morrow."

He had bowed himself out, and was crossing the hall, when he espied Elgitha's maid tripping hurriedly up the staircase, and called to her.

"How is Miss A'Beckett?" he asked.

"Oh, she—she's pretty well thank you sir!" the damsel replied rather confusedly, casting a rapid glance at Mrs. A'Beckett, who was in the drawing-room doorway. "She is not very well—headache, sir; but she's better, thank you."

"There is some screw loose," Robert thought uneasily.

"Tell Miss Beckett I called, please; and —— Those lilies—may I give them to the maid to carry up to Ellie?" he asked.

"Certainly, my dear Mr. Clydesdale!" replied the lady sweetly. "She will be so pleased! Lilies of the valley are very beautiful, aren't they? Take them to Miss A'Beckett at once, Wilkinson."

"Give them to your mistress, with my love, and say I will call to-morrow," Robert added, in an undertone.

The maid curtseyed and reddened, and hurried off on her errand.

Robert Clydesdale had almost reached the lodge-gates, when from the sidewalk appeared Elgitha's maid flushed and breathless with running.

"Here, sir! Please," she panted, "you—you forgot the letter, sir—the letter for Lord Clydesdale!"

Robert stared an instant, and then detected the ruse as Wilkinson put a huge, torn, legal-looking envelope into his hand and at the same time a scrap of tinted note-paper with Elgitha's monogram. On the half-sheet of paper was scrawled in a scarcely legible hand—"Robert, I want to see you in the grounds to-night.'

"All right, thank you," he said; and the girl disappeared as she had come; and Robert Clydesdale went to the nearest hotel, about a mile from Beckett Court, and waited as patiently as he could for the evening.

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Robert waited till the heavy dew was falling like mist on the grass, and the night-moths were flitting in the shadows of the trees, waiting till he felt himself growing cold and stiff and unutterably cross; and, at last, when he had quite given Elgitha up, he saw two figures coming through the twilight. One sat down discreetly on a rustic chair at a distance, and one came forward. It was poor Elgie, clad in a long dark waterproof, and looking like the ghost of some forlorn young nun.

"Why, my dear girl," began Robert, attempting to offer her a lover-like greeting; but she put him back with a certain dignity of gesture that startled him.

"I came to speak to you here because I dare not in the house," she said, in a low broken voice. "I have something to tell you which you must know. I have been forbidden—threatened—but I will tell you. I owe you a duty—it is right to tell you."

"What is it, Ellie, my dear? What is it?" Robert asked soothingly, for the girl was evidently in a state of distracted agitation.

"This," see answered—"that I've lost all my money—at least, my father has—and she'n't have any, and they won't tell you until all is over—until you have married me; and I know you would not if you knew I had no money, and it would be wicked to deceive you! That is all. Don't tell them I told you, if you can help it, "the poor little creature sobbed, her courage giving way. "I am so afraid of mamma finding out, or my father; but—I—I—couldn't deceive you!'

"Has your father lost his fortune Ellie?" Robert asked, when he could speak. "Poor man! I am sorry from my heart for him. It is enough to kill him."

That is what mamma said," Ellie sobbed. "She said that if I told you you would not marry me, and that would kill my father; but I would tell you—I wouldn't dare to be so wicked as to make you think I was rich when I knew I had no fortune."

Robert remained silent, absolutely from emotion.

"And so," the girl continued, wiping away her tears with a quiet hope lessness that brought the moisture to Robert's own eyes, "now that I have told you, I shall not feel so dreadful. Since I knew it, when papa was taken ill last night, I have been nearly mad. Don't tell them only let them know that you don't wish to marry me—by degrees you know—I am so afraid of them!" she added piteously, breaking down again. "Good—good-bye! I am very sorry. I wish—I wish——"

"What do you wish, Ellie?" Robert asked, clasping her in his arms and kissing the pale tear-wet face. "My poor little girl, my poor little wife!"

"Oh, don't," she cried convulsively—"don't call me that! Oh, my heart will break—it will! Oh, Robert, Robert, my darling Robert! Oh, do go away, or my heart will break!"

But Robert did not go away; he held her very close, his arms tightly locked around the slim little waist under the big waterproof cloak.

"Ellie," he said severely, "you are my wife in the sight of Heaven, and you must obey me—me—remember!"

"Yes, Robert," she sobbed.

"Well, do then," said Robert. "Stop crying, in the first place; run in out of the dew, and go to bed comfortably, in the next place; promise you will marry me on the day after to-morrow, in the third place; and kiss me, in the fourth place."

"But, Robert, I haven't any money—I haven't indeed!" cried Ellie sorrowfully. 'Poor papa said I was a beggar!"—and she began crying piteously again.

"You're disobeying me; and you're not a beggar, for beggars never have black silk dresses and gold watches set with diamonds!" retorted Robert. "Kiss me, and be an obedient little wife."

"I will do anything you wish," she whispered, putting her smooth cheek to his. "If you told me to die, I would try to die, if it would please you."

"Why, Ellie," he said softly, "do you care so much for me?"

"Care for you!" she echoed, trembling. "I love you so much that I can't love anything else but you!"

"Well, then, Ellie, Heaven helping me, it shall not be my fault if you ever love me less to the last hour of your life!"

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On the following day Robert Clydesdale had a short interview with the curate of the parish church near Beckett Court, and afterwards he paid a visit to the Court to inquire about Mr. Beckett and to give Wilkinson a letter for her mistress with a half-sovereign for herself.

The next morning, at about the same time, Mrs. A'Beckett received a message in her dressing-room to the effect that Mr. Clydesdale wanted to see her in the library very particularly; and, when, after very hastily completing her toilet, she presented herself, she was confronted by that gentleman and her daughter Elgitha leaning on his arm, looking very bright and happy.

"We were married just ten minutes ago, Mrs. A'Beckett," announced her son-in-law brusquely. "We have saved you a lot of additional trouble, and ourselves some as well; and, besides, it was the only proper course to pursue in view of her father's illness and the cause of that illness."

His tone told her the truth, and Mrs. A'Beckett's face grew ashy-pale.

"You wicked, disobedient girl!" she muttered hoarsely, and then she said to Robert, "You have really married her? She is your wife—really?"

"She is really my wife—the Honorable Mrs. Clydesdale," he replied, smiling coldly.

"Oh, my poor child, how could you deceive your poor mother and go off and get married privately, you bad, naughty pet?" Mrs. A'Beckett cried effusively, angry and delighted and also frightened.

Her daughter would now assuredly be Viscountess Clydesdale whatever befell; but the suddenness of the news, her suppressed wrath at being outwitted, and her husband's precarious condition combined to induce a fit of hysterics.

Having seen her safely through this, Robert drove his wife up to town, and then went and had an interview with his father.

What transpired at that interview nobody knew; but Mr. Clydesdale came back very pale and quiet to his young wife. And after they had dined at their hotel, and were sitting side by side at the open window in the warm summer evening, he laid his head wearily on the gentle breast that throbbed with gladness at his touch.

"My little wife," he said, "I think it will be well for you and I to care for each other more than for anything else on earth. We are not likely to have many to divide our affection with."

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The crash of ruin soon came, and after Beckett Court and all its contents had fallen under the auctioneer's hammer, Mr. and Mrs. A'Beckett went abroad for a few months, and then returned to England to live on what remained to them of their past wealth.

Between their suburban villa and their daughter's home they spent the year, and it was like a honeyed draught to the lips of the unlucky pair to speak of "My daughter, the Honorable Mrs. Clydesdale."

Robert and his little Elgitha were living a halcyon life at Clydesdale Hall, the Honorable Robert having taking to sheep-raising and calf-feeding and pig-fattening with the utmost satisfaction and an amount of success not often achieved by a tyro in farming matters.

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Seven years after Miss A'Beckett's marriage, the Viscount, being very ill, sent for his son and his wife, and when he saw her who had been Elgitha Rowena A'Beckett, he did not know her.

She was a stout handsome young matron with blooming cheeks and dimples, a pleasant smile in her sunny eyes, and a gracious gentle manner.

"I'd like to see your children, Elgitha," he said tremulously. "You have children, I know—Robert always sent me word."

"Oh, dear," yes, a number of them, Lord Clydesdale, his daughter-in-law said merrily—"two girls and twin boys. They are all at the hotel with their nurse."

The blooming country children were brought one by one into the shaded room where the old nobleman lay.

"What a lovely child your eldest girl is, Robert!" he remarked later on to his son. "I can tell she will be a beauty. What is her name?"

"Lily," answered Robert, smiling at his wife. "She was born just twelve months after our marriage. Ellie had sentimentally associated a bunch of lilies with the happiest day of her life, she says; so she gave her that name, as she was born in the time 'When Lilies Blow.'"

OLD POSTAL SYSTEMS.—The postal service is older than any written history. In the earliest known records of any part of the world it is spoken of as something already established.

The book of Job, written nearly 3,500 years ago, refers to it in ch. ix., 25, "My days are swifter than a post." The "posts" were the stopping or camping places (post-offices) where relays of horses and men were kept for the forwarding of letters, and they finally gave their name to the whole service.

Such arrangements for the transmission of letters and dispatches were a special necessity in every kingdom or empire, and their establishment must have been coeval with the formation of such governments. The monarchies of Persia and Assyria had a system of posts, but they were originated long before their day.

Rome constructed highways especially for their use, and these can now be traced throughout the whole of that vast empire. At fixed intervals were placed men, carriages, horses, supplies, and everything necessary for the conveyance and forwarding of letters and dispatches, and these went with a good degree of regularity, and often with great rapidity, one record showing that the whole breadth of Europe was traversed at the rate of 160 miles a day. The passengers under the Roman system carried both public and private letters, and the service was conducted with great regularity.

In later years the different sovereigns of Europe established a postal service primarily for their own convenience in the transmission of government dispatches, but private letters were always carried, and as a rule, the business was always farmed out to royal favorites who enjoyed the emolument.

In England it was undertaken by private persons, but the government frequently interfered, and on lucrative routes gave the monopoly of the business to court favorites. In 1481 Edward VI. established lines of post-riders for the royal service; and Richard III. improved it in 1483.

The first Chief Postmaster in England was appointed by Queen Elizabeth in 1581. The post-office, very much as at present constituted, was founded by act of Parliament in the reign of Charles II., December 27, 1660.

The postal system for the American colonies was projected in 1691 and organized in 1710. Benjamin Franklin became Deputy Postmaster General in 1753, and in 1760 established mail coaches between Philadelphia and Boston.

THE MISTAKES OF LIFE.—Somebody has condensed the mistakes of life, and arrived at the conclusion that there are fourteen of them. Most people would say, if they told the truth, that there was no limit to the mistakes of life: that they were like the drops in the ocean or the sands of the shore in number, but it is well to be accurate. Here, then, are fourteen great mistakes: It is a mistake to set up our own standard of right and wrong, and judge people accordingly; to measure the enjoyment of others by our own; to expect uniformity of opinion in this world; to look for judgment and experience in youth; to endeavor to mould all dispositions alike; to yield to immaterial trifles; to look for perfection in our own actions; to worry ourselves and others with what cannot be remedied; not to alleviate all the needs of alleviation as far as lies in our power; not to make allowances for the infirmities of others; to consider everything impossible that we cannot perform, to believe only what our finite minds can grasp; to expect to be able to understand everything.

A SENTIMENTAL and sermonizing father reproached his youthful ones at breakfast recently for their epicurean desires, saying, that, when he was a poor lad and had little prospect of becoming the great millionaire he is at present, he was contented to live on porridge and dry bread. "Oh, papa," exclaimed his eldest maiden, "what a lucky thing it is for you that you are now living with us! You must indeed feel the change, and that you are having a good time of it. Aren't you grateful?"

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

It appears that there are now 207 new railroads in progress in the United States. These lines are spread over the American Union as follows.—New England, 7, Middle States, 33; Southern States, 56; Western States, 92 and Pacific States, 19. The extent of the new lines is:—New England, 202 miles; Middle States, 688 miles; Southern States, 2,296 miles; Western States, 5,077 miles and Pacific States, 1,088 miles, making an aggregate of 9,248 miles.

The Government of Servia has just granted a monopoly for the sale of tobacco to a Vienna bank in consideration for the loan of $10,000,000 during the last war. Patriotic smokers are now threatening to discontinue the use of tobacco and the strike is likely to become general, as was the case in Hungary under precisely the same circumstances in 1852, and in Lombardy-Venetia in 1859, when the Italian patriots tried to injure Austria by a general abstention from the weed. At that time there existed private committees whose business it was to induce smokers, by threats or gentle suasion, to renounce their favorite habit. Those who would not comply with the demand were branded as "Schwarzelber" (Austrians) and excluded from the pale of good society.

Work has actually been commenced to construct a tunnel between France and England under the stormy channel. Indeed there are two tunnels under way, each distinct; one by an English company, the other by a syndicate of railroad people on the Continent. This will be a wonderful work, if ever completed. It will be of great value to travelers and merchants, for it will unite the railway system of England, Wales and Scotland with that of France and the Continent. The freight business it would do would be enormous, for the thousands of vessels now employed to convey goods from Great Britain to the Continent would be no longer needed. But still, the completion of this vast enterprise is far in the future, and it may be there are difficulties in the way which may prevent its consummation.

The Produce Exchange of New York City, costing with land and furniture a grand total of $3,178,645.14, is a valuable index of progressive wealth and civilization. It includes 12,000,000 bricks, 15 miles of iron girders, 1¾ miles of columns, 2,001 tons of terra cotta, 7½ acres of flooring, more than 2,000 windows, nearly 1,000 doors, 7½ miles of sash cords and chains, over 47 tons of sash weights, on fifth of an acre of skylight over the Exchange Room, 29 miles of steam-pipes, nearly a mile if panelled wainscoting, and weighs over 50,000 tons. Four thousand separate drawings were required for its construction. The nine hydraulic elevators carry an average of 21,500 people daily, or 6,500,000 every year. The pumping capacity is sufficient to supply water to a city of 175,000 inhabitants, and 1,194,194,193 horse power is utilized annually for heat and force.

Although the Japanese never stored or used ice until the advent of foreigners, they have taken to the use of it since then with alacrity, and are as bad as Americans for drinking ice water. Men with portable stands slung over their shoulders perambulate the streets night and day crying: "Kori! kori! kori!" (ice! ice! ice!) Their chief patrons are the jinrickisha men, who have most ready money and are spendthrifts by nature. The kori man, when called, sets down his stand, produces a lump of ice, shaves it as fine as snow over a plane. It is then mixed with sugar and sold at two or three rings (an eighth of a cent) a glass, to the panting jinrickisha men. This mixture, which they themselves aptly call shiro uki (white stuff or snow), is not bad, and the newly-arrived foreigner, when out of the sight of other foreigners, is not averse to indulging in it.

Mr. James Nasmyth, of England, says in his autobiography: The Duke of Athlone committed my father as to the improvements which he desired to make in his woodland scenery near Dunkeld. The Duke was desirous that a rocky crag, called Craigybarns, should be planted with trees to relieve the grim barrenness of its appearance. But it was impossible for any man to climb the crag in order to set seeds or plants in the clefts of the rocks. A happy idea struck my father. Having observed in front of the castle a pair of small cannons, used for firing salutes, it occurred to him to turn them to account. His object was to deposit the seeds of the various trees amongst the soil in the clefts of the crags. A tinsmith in the village was ordered to make a number of canisters with covers. The canisters were filled with all sorts of suitable tree seeds. A cannon was loaded, and the canisters were fired up against the high face of the rock. They burst and scattered the seed in all directions. Some years after, when my father revisited the place, he was delighted to find that his scheme of planting by artillery had proved completely successful, for the trees were flourishing luxuriantly in all the recesses of the cliff.

George Washington, William Penn and Christopher Columbus went on a terrible spree in New York New Year's Day. If the police docket of the next morning is to be believed.

LEAN liberty is better than fat slavery.

Our Young Folks.

THE WAVE BROTHERS.

BY EBBA SYLANDER.

FAR up in the north, in a rough wooden hut by the shores of a great gulf, lived Yeva Sundele and her five little brothers.

They had no father or mother. Some years before the good farmer Sundele and his wife had died, leaving their children as their only legacy the log-house surrounded by fields, that formed a kind of island in the vast pine forest.

Since then Yeva's days had all been busy ones. She was not fifteen years old, and as to her brothers, the eldest, Eirk, was barely nine, while Kay, Kolonn, and Nelbo, ranged down in regular order till they finished off with little Yes, who was the pet and darling of the whole family.

The only folks from the outside world who ever came to the log-house were the few travelers journeying from the south to the town of Vekila, who stopped there to change horses—for the Sundeles from time immemorial had kept the only posting-house of the district.

It was a still, peaceful evening when I shall commence my story. The setting sun shone on the heaving waters of the gulf, and not a breath of wind stirred the stately pine trees.

A few birds twittered sleepily on the branches, and even the mosquitoes forgot to be active, and whispered amongst themselves that they would take a holiday among the juniper bushes that grew along the shore.

In this beautiful northern twilight Yeva loved to sit with her brothers on a moss-green rock by the water's edge, whilst they dabbled their feet in the little waves, and listened to tales of the beings known to the sway of "Toiti" the Gulf Troll, and "Venda" the fair spirit of the moon.

And here she would return when the children were safely asleep to gaze across the water, and dream—dream of a thousand things which had been whispered to her by the little waves, and by the sweet, sad-faced Venda as she rose from behind the distant shore and came gliding towards her, with beautiful shining garments floating over the sparkling ripples.

But now the evening shadows crept on, and Yeva stood at the door of the log-house calling to her little brothers, who were busily picking the green tobacco that grew in the field beyond.

"Eirk! Eirk! Kolonn!" she called; "come, my children. You can leave your work now, and run and play by the old rock, but remember to come home before the moon rises. I have much to do to-night, so I cannot come with you."

As she spoke the children threw all and a traveler in a wooden cart drove up to the farmstead, and taking off his cap to the maiden, inquired if he could have fresh horses to continue his journey that night.

The stranger was a youth, handsome and dark. A kindly smile lighted up his grave face as he offered to help Yeva search for the horses, who had strayed from the meadow, and wandered into the depths of the forest.

"What is thy name, fair maiden?" said the stranger when they had walked some time in silence through the deep green shadows of the fir-trees.

"My name is Yeva," replied the maiden with a sigh, "and yours?"

"They call me Hedva," said the youth, "and I have journeyed hither on a sad errand. But before months ago my father, Bestla and Ysta, were playing on the shores of the land of Wanas-land across the waters, though far away in the sunny south. Long they played there by the sea-shore's foot, and the ocean rose softly from beneath the silvered hills. Then the children, wearied with their play, lay asleep under the sheltering trees, and Bestla and Ysta arose from his knee and swam through the waves to where his palace of crystal lay. Wearying of their long absence, I wandered softly down to the shore to call them home; but a horrible sight met my eyes. Bestla was lying dead on the sand, and Ysta was being carried far, far away, by a little gulf-fish—a seal. Now, Northern maiden, who would keep me to rescue my brothers. At dawn of day I started in my chariot, and, guided by Venda, have arrived here in safety at last. Now, oh, Yeva, help me! help me!"

Yeva ceased at last to speak with tears in her eyes.

"Alas, poor Hedva! How can I, a simple maiden, help you to rescue your brothers from the Evil Troll? But see, Venda has risen once! Let us go down to the water's edge, and I will tell you what counsel I can give you."

All [illegible]

[illegible]

"Alas, poor Yeva!" cried Hedva. "Alas! and what shall we do?" For Yeva's grief touched him to the heart.

"Oh, tell me what has become of my dear brothers?"

The waves lifted up their sad voices together as they cried:

"Alas! alas! Thy little brothers were found sleeping on the shore; the Evil Troll arose and seized them for his own, and they are now waited far out on the Gulf—away from their home and you who loved them!"

Poor Yeva, weeping bitterly, threw herself down on the rock where they had spent so many happy hours; and Hedva tried in vain to comfort her.

Then came Venda with a sweet, smile of compassion, and stood by her side till her sobs ceased, and a faint gleam of hope stole into her sorrowful heart.

"Yeva!" whispered the gentle voice tenderly. "Yeva, look up, my child!" Listen while I tell thee of the means by which thou mayest even yet save thy dear little brothers."

Yeva started up eagerly.

"Oh, tell me! tell me, gentle Venda! Whatever it may be, however hard, however difficult, I will do it—even though it may be to journey to that land which the Ice-Trolls hold forever in their freezing clutches!"

"Patience my Yeva. The way is long and difficult, and many trials will beset thy path; but meet them with unswerving courage, let no obstacle turn thee aside, and success will be thine at last. You must know, poor maiden, that the evil power given by my beams to the Gulf-Troll, Toiti, is the cause of my constant sadness, and of the mournful influence I exercise over the minds of men. I cannot, alas, save his victims, but I can at least decide that is possible to help them regain their natural forms; and this can be accomplished but in one way.

"Far, far away, beyond the Varvanda Mountains, in the midst of perpetual snow, where the beautiful Aurora blushes brightly in the sky, and the spirits of the Northern Lights shower their dances in mimic warfare, lies the vast plain, unknown to men, called the Land of Words. I have often explained to thee that each Northern child has at its birth two 'Guardian Trolls' appointed to watch over it—the one for Good, the other for Evil. Now the mission of these Trolls is to carry the words spoken by their charges, and arrange them in piles on their separate plain. Every moral has its separate spot appointed to it; and there the two piles of words arise daily—the good tinted with all the colors of light and joy, the evil with that of inky blackness.

"This marvelous land is surrounded with dangers, for Toiti is in league with the Trolls of the Woods, Hills and Rivers, who without rest to keep mortals from entering the enchanted plain; but if them hast enough determination to surmount all obstacles, and can fetch from thence sufficient number of thy brothers' golden words to fill the ripples on the sand of the shore before thy hut, then will Toiti's power over them cease, and they will instantly regain their former shape. The ripples must be filled at the moment when I first step upon the waters of the Gulf; and if then, Hedva, will accompany Yeva, then shall thy two brothers be restored to thee at the same time."

Hedva and Yeva fell at Venda's feet in a way too great for words.

"Is it indeed true that thou will protect us, dear Venda?" they cried. "May we not set forth at once?"

"Yes, my children, at once," said Venda. "Go to the shed beside the house, and you will find Kustu Yaervi, the reindeer, who belonged to do me service. Harness him to thy cart, and he will carry thee safely on thy journey to the far North. Remember my counsel, if thou dost but once allow any danger to turn thee aside, Kustu Yaervi will carry thee instantly back to the homestead, and the fate of the little waves will be sealed for ever. In this I cannot help thee, only with courage and patience and firm determination to battle with those enemies, call upon me when thou art ready to press against them, and I will assist thee."

Hedva and Yeva lost not a moment, but ran to the shed where the reindeer was awaiting them.

Yeva hastily collected some provisions, which she placed in the cart; and Kustu Yaervi being harnessed, they jumped in, and were soon flying at lightning speed, up the rough track towards the blue outlines of the Varvanda Mountains. Every moment their pace increased, until at last Kustu Yaervi scarcely seemed to touch the ground with his hoofs as he bounded on.

"Ah, how swiftly we fly!" cried Yeva, whose long fair hair was streaming in the wind, and her blue eyes glowing with excitement.

As she spoke their speed slackened, and they saw before them a dense thicket of what appeared to be endless pine branches stretching straight across the path. So closely were they entwined that they formed an impenetrable barrier to Kustu Yaervi's progress. He turned his head and gazed at Hedva with a beseeching look in his mild eyes, saying, as plainly as words, "I cannot make a way for me through [illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[

UNBROKEN EVERMORE.

BY RITA.

And thou art gone forever? Can it be
That years will pass without thy voice to bless
The children who have always turned to thee
For loving counsel and a kind caress?
Must life roll onward, onward, every day,
Without a chance thy gentle face to see?
Without a Mother's love to cheer our way?
Tell me, poor heart, must this long sorrow be,
This life-long sorrow be?

In looking backward o'er our changing life
Our Mother's love has ever cheered us on;
Smiling upon us when our joys were rife,
Or grieving with us when some hope was gone.
We never knewn sorrow or a woe—
We never found our hearts bound joyfully—
But the first impulse was all to go
For sympathy, with each new change, to thee,
Sweet Mother, straight to thee.

But now thy voice is hushed! Thy grave is green,
The home that knew thee sees thee no more,
Vacant the places where thy form hath been;
Silent the footfall loved so well of yore?
Yes! through life's troubled waters thou hast pass'd
Into a great beyond of endless day—
From mists succeeding showers to sunlight vast,
From trials deep to blessedness alway—
Pure blessedness alway.

Though lonely now, our hearts will keep a place
Sacred to thee, dead mother; set apart
To love and thee. Time never can efface
Thy blessed memory from each child's sad heart,
For we are sad! Mother lost from our home
Breaks its sweet charm, shades the love spot o'er
With a dark cloud, to stay till, one by one,
We find a better home on Heaven's bright shore,
Unbroken evermore.

AT THEIR MEALS.

If you had been asked to dine with one of the old Britons, from whom many in America are descended, you who have been invited to take your seat on the skin of a wolf or dog, spread upon the ground, and if your host was not rich enough to indulge in this luxury, a little bundle of straw would be used as a substitute.

Your host and hostess, with their children, would have waited upon you with such marks of respect as belonged to the age, and after you had finished your meal, they would take your place, and consume whatever you had left.

You would have seen spread before you very little bread, but a great abundance of meat—venison, beef, and the flesh of sheep and goats. Your drink would have been ale, very thin and insipid; and mead, a liquor made of honey and water fermented, and which was once regarded as the favorite drink of the pagan gods.

In the earliest period of British history the bread-stuff was nothing but a porridge of flour or meal, and boiled. Later on they improved upon this, and kneaded the flour into a kind of tough, unleavened cake, which we should regard as very indigestible and difficult to masticate.

There were no ovens in those times, and the bread was baked on a hot stone or a gridiron. The familiar story of King Alfred's burning the cake, with the good dame of the house, in ignorance of his rank, had set him to watch, will here be likely to recur to the mind of the reader.

The bread was always made by the mistress of the house, for there were no bakers' shops even in London until 1443. The first bakers were the monks, and the bake-house was sometimes attached to the church. The profession of a baker ranked very high. The bread most commonly used by tradesmen in early days was made of barley, or rye mixed with peas.

Wheaten bread was regarded as a special luxury, and it was a long time before it came into general use. As to the table furniture of your British host—if the wolf or dog-skin could with any propriety, be called a table—you would have seen very little of any sort; forks and spoons, and plates, and tumblers, for each individual's use, were unknown, and the knives looked like long, pointed daggers, used by the master of ceremonies to convey to his guests their portion of meat, which they would then dispose of with their fingers as they best could.

If you were invited to dine with a Saxon gentleman some generations later, you would have found a great deal more of style and form. You would have been seated at a large square table, surrounded by long benches, the order of rank being carefully regarded in the seating of the guests.

By a law of Canute, it was allowable to pelt with bones any person who took a higher seat then that which belonged to him. The mistress of the family sat at the head of the table, on a platform slightly raised, and distributed the bread. Hence the title of "lady" or server of bread. The men and women were seated apart. The table was covered with a rich cloth, and a cup or horn of silver or gold, given to each guest.

The food was plentiful, but plain; and an old picture represents a man cutting a piece of meat off the spit upon a plate held by a servant underneath, with cakes of bread oblong, square, and round dishes on the table.

If you had been a visitor in the family of one of the Danes, at a still later period, you would have been expected to consume four meals a-day, and sit long at the table. The excessive drinking in which this rough people indulged led to frequeat scenes of discord and cruel violence.

After the Norman Conquest—1066—the four meals were reduced to two; and later on, in the reign of Edward III., laws were enacted to restrain the excessive luxury and extravagance which had prevailed. Notwithstanding this, we read of the King's giving an entertainment of thirty courses, the fragments of which sufficed to feed one thousand persons,

French cooks were introduced into England about this time, and the art of cookery became more elaborate than it had been before. Breakfast was not a usual meal with these ancestors, except when they had four meals every day, and in the time of Edward the dinner hour was nine o'clock in the morning.

Richard II. kept two thousand cooks, and about this time breakfast began to assume some prominence as a meal, and among the items served we read of "bread and wine, boiled beef, beer, salt fish, brawn, mustard, &c." On a sant's day there was a great display of paste and jelly in the form of angels; prophets, and patriarchs; and on other occasions the figures of various animals were displayed.

At the banquet a side-table was provided for the ale and wine, which was handed to the guests in wooden and pewter goblets. The hours with the nobility were as follows: Breakfast at seven, ordinarily consisting of herrings, beer, wine, and salt fish; dinner at ten, and usually lasting three hours; supper at four; and a collation at nine in the evening, on which occasion a gallon of beer, with a quart of warm wine mixed with spice, served for a small family. At this period the dining-room was strewed with rushes, and the men dined with their hats on their heads.

Forks were first introduced in the reign of James I., and their use was ridiculed and protested against as tending to effeminacy. The spoons were made of the roots of box, brass, and horn, and folded up like a modern jack-knife.

The drinking of healths was originally a religious ceremony, and the saying of grace at meals dates back to the remotest antiquity.

Grains of Gold.

Few people are qualified to be old.

I like not to make a toil of pleasure.

If you cannot bite, never show your teeth.

All vice infatuates and corrupts the judgment.

Yielding is sometimes the best way for succeeding.

What a dust I have raised, quoth the fly on the wheel.

The remedy of to-morrow is too late for the evil of to-day.

We are born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed.

The wise man knows he knows nothing, the fool thinks he knows all.

There's nothing agrees worse than a proud mind and a beggar's purse.

It is not easy to straighten in the oak the crook that grew in the sapling.

Great good often remains unaccomplished, merely because it is not attempted.

It is a miserable sight to see a poor man proud and a rich man avaricious.

The violence done us by others is often less painful than that which we do to ourselves.

We easily forgive those who weary us, but can never forgive those who are wearied by us.

Two things a man should never be angry at: what he can help and what he cannot help.

It is a common fault to be never satisfied with our fortune, nor dissatisfied with our understanding.

A man of sense finds much less difficulty in submitting to one who is wrong-headed than in attempting to set him right.

Femininities.

The pond lily with a diamond heart is one of the new flower pins.

Some young ladies in a Western town have organized a hugging club.

Butterflies, beetles, catsheads, swallows and bees are fancies in hairpins.

Lotta, the actress, who upon the stage looks about 20 years old, was 40 the other day.

A Frenchman has conceived the idea of having lady advertisers who will show his goods on the promenade.

In the various trifles that make or mar the happiness of daily life, little courtesies play a most important part.

A child in Havana that had been captured by the banditti some time ago has been released on payment of a ransom of $2,000.

Nearly all women in the Punjab can embroider in silk or cotton. The work is chiefly done for wrappers and veils, for their own use.

A woman in Bridgeport, Conn., last week, while cutting bread, bit right to sight from the middle of the loaf a set of teeth supposed to belong to the baker.

Archbishop Leroy, of New Orleans, in consequence of past disturbances by drunken men, prohibited the celebration of midnight mass on Christmas eve.

A girl in Jersey City has been compelled to order the arrest of a young man to relieve herself of his attentions, which were pestiferous, though meant to be respectful.

A woman was in a grocery store looking at roller pins. "You may give me two of 'them,'" she said. "Two of them?" queried the clerk. "Yes; I want to keep one of them clean for bread."

"Ma," said Jennie Parvenu, "what is the silver question there is so much fuss a'bout?" "Oh," answered ma, "it's whether we shall use plated ware or real solid silver at the dinner parties!"

The prejudice against the fork in England remained for centuries after its first introduction. The old dessert-set, it may not be generally known, consisted of eleven knives and one fork only—for ginger.

An exchange calls attention to the fact that it is no longer fashionable for women to faint. This grows out of the habit people have of pouring water on one's bangs. "there will be no more fainting until the bangs are unfashionable.

Fogg: "Dreadfully close here. I think I'll open the transom." Smoothboro: "Ah, that makes me think of a story." Binks: "What does?" Smoothboro: "Why, Fogg opening the transom." Binks: "Fogg, shut that transom."

The following makes an excellent tooth powder: Suds of castile soap and spirits of camphor, of each an equal quantity; thicken with equal quantities of pulverized chalk and charcoal to a thick paste. Apply with the finger or brush.

There is one post office to every 635 people in Canada, and the Dominion has more post-offices to the same number of people than any other country in the world. In the United States there is one postoffice to every 1,092 inhabitants.

Mrs. Standford, of Snelling, Merced county, Cal., buried $2,500 in gold in the cellar of her house for safe keeping. Her seven-year-old boy found the hoard, however, and had distributed $700 of it among his playmates before he was found out.

Better a thousand times to grow old over a spinning-wheel and the ashes of a cooking-stove than to become gray with artificial flowers in the hair, on the benches of the ball-room, or the seat of the supper-room, smiling over the world, when smiles over us no longer.

A German man of science has taken four heads of hair of equal weight, and then proceeded to count the individual hairs. One was of the red variety, and it was found to contain 90,000 hairs. Next comes the black, with 103,000 hairs to its credit. The brown had 109,000, and the blonde 140,000. The blonde wins.

A curious offer was made the other day by a lady who recently returned from traveling in Palestine. She had brought back with her a keg full of the water of the river Jordan, which she sent to Windsor, with a note, offering it for baptism of Princess Beatrice's baby. The Queen at once accepted the gift and sent to the donor an autograph letter of thanks.

A young white woman, 28 years old, of New York, and whose relatives are very well-to-do people, believes she has been dead since last August. She tries to look dead and there are few persons about the house with whom she will carry on conversation, and only at such times when laboring under the belief that they are mediums will she consent to talk.

A young woman who was seeking employment as a cook in a house in Brooklyn scared her would-be employer nearly into convulsions recently by displaying a pretty heavy beard upon removing her veil. The housekeeper had her arrested, supposing her to be a man. At the station house the young woman had her beard shaved off, and was discharged from custody.

The drain pipe, regarded critically, can hardly be considered a beautiful object. In fact, if any article had to be named which combined positive ugliness of outline with plainness and prosaic suppleness, the drain-pipe would take the prize. Some genius, however, has discovered that, set up, the flange end down-wards, a drain-pipe makes an excellent umbrella stand, and that if a pretty design is traced upon it in different colors, it becomes a thing both of beauty and utility.

A Christmas tree distribution occurred at a colored church in Ga. As but few of the members could read or write, they were each expected to bring what they wished to while the names on the presents which she readily consented to do. When the presents were distributed and the names called out, the assembly was greatly surprised to find that the handsomest and most valuable presents had on them the name of the girl that did the writing. An indignation meeting was hastily held, and a redistribution of the presents ordered immediately.

Masculinities.

Buffalo Bill earned his title by killing 680 buffaloes.

The Tartar father takes to his bed on the birth of a son and heir.

It is said the Prince of Wales amuses himself by playing the banjo.

"What do you think of Smith?" "Smith? Well, Smith looks to me like one of those chaps who are always likely to blow out the gas."

A statue of Daniel O'Connell is to be placed in the British House of Commons.

A New Haven (Conn.) man has brought suit for $5,000 against a woman who jilted him.

At an evening party: "You like the piano, monsieur?" "Yes; I prefer it to the guillotine."

"Sparks fly upward," said the old man as he sacked his daughter's dearest off the front steps.

Governor Lee, of Virginia, is credited with being the champion checker player of the South.

Imperiousness and severity is but an ill way of treating men who have reason of their own to guide them.

A Schuyler, Neb., farmer sent East for one hundred cats, and turned them out to find homes for themselves.

A New York photographer has an album in which he exhibits the portraits of people who do not pay for their photographs.

If there be a man whose weak side has never been discovered, it is only because we have never accurately looked for it.

Some men began the new year by buying a new umbrella and a diary, and are going to make a note of the one they keep the longest.

Emigration from Germany of young men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five is strictly forbidden by law; all vessels leaving Hamburg are watched by the police on this account.

"How can I tell when a man blacks his own shoes?" said the bootblack. "Why easy enough; by lookin' at the backs on 'em. They allus black up the toes an' leaves the heels ter look as if they'd been brought up in the country."

The supervisor of the town of Cortlandt, N. Y., offered a resolution in the Board of supervisors recently to rescind the resolution to build a house in which tramps should be required to bail out water as fast as it runs in or drown.

A French statistician has figured out that a man during a lifetime of 40 years sleeps away 6,000 days, works away the same period, eats away 2,000 days, walks away 800 days, is ill 500 days and devotes the balance of his time to amusing himself.

Young Lady (in book store)—A volume of poetry, please, Clerk—Yes, ma'am. Er—What author, Young Lady—Oh, I don't care anything about the author, but the cover must harmonize with a cherry parlor table with a red-plush top."

An epitaph, of which the following is said to be a copy, is cut on the stone over a Cornish miner's grave at Calumet, Mich.:

Him cannot come to we
But us shall surely go to he.

Pious tradesmen in Constantinople have to pray twelve times a day, and so they have to do their trading between times. If they happen to get hold of a foreigner who is inclined to pay them well for an article of trade the Koran allows them to miss one prayer.

In a province of China 700 able bodied men crippled themselves by maiming their hands to escape military duty. In China the pay of a common soldier is about three-fifths of a cent a day. Three hundred of the maimed men had their heads taken off as a warning to others.

A resident of Danbury, Ct., touched his finger recently to a wire charged electric wire, "just for the fun of the thing," and was instantly knocked down, and didn't recover for several hours. He was considerably frightened, and more so when told that if he had grasped the wire he would have been instantly killed.

He: "Tell me, my pet—are you superstitious?" She: "What a funny question! Why do you want to know?" He: "Answer me first." She: "Why, I am not in the least superstitious!" He: "Then, I don't mind telling you you are my thirteenth sweetheart!"

Almost any evening, if you have a chance to look, you can see happy young couples practicing lovers in attitudes in the parlor. There is one position in which the steerer gets his chin on his passenger's shoulder, which requires a good deal of practice, but is awful nice when you get it.

As husband and wife were having a little evening quarrel, their only child, little Johnny, rushed in, and exclaimed, "Pa, what does my teacher mean by saying that I inherited my bad temper?" Pa hesitated, but Ma spontaneously replied, "She meant that you are your father's own son," and then burst into tears.

In Canton Neuchatel, Switzerland, a good handicraft is taught to every prisoner, and all who are well-behaved are after a period placed with a master of the trade which they have severally learned, under the oversight of the police and of a member of a voluntary committee. In this way, if his conduct remains good, the man's liberty is gradually restored.

Le Jones: "What in the world are you doing Pomkins?" Pomkins: "Cutting an account of a robbery out of a paper to show my wife." Le Jones (tragically): "Well, that's a queer proceeding." Pomkins: "Not at all. You see, this house was robbed while the owner was at church." Le Jones (with sudden interest): "No! You don't mean it, say! You haven't got another copy of that paper, have you?"

"Do I love George," mused Clara softly, "or is it simply a sister's affection that I feel for?" Just then Bobby burst noisily into the room and interrupted her sweet meditations. "Sis! out of here, you little brat!" she shouted, and seizing him by the arm shot him through the door. "Ah, no," she sighed, as she resumed her interrupted train of thought, "my love for George is not a sister's love. It is something sweeter, purer, higher and holier."

Recent Book Issues.

"Christine the Model," by Emile Zola, just published by T. B. Peterson & Brothers, of this city, is the latest production of the world-famous realistic novelist's pen. The hero is Nana's brother, Claude Lantier, the son of Gervaise and Lantier of "L'Assommoir." It is a very lively bit of writing, perhaps too highly flavored for some who rightly object to such made dishes, but at the same time bound to please a great many readers. Price, 75 cents.

One of the very best of the many historical novels published of late, is "The Martyr of Golgotha." It is translated from the Spanish of Enrique Perez Escrich, by A. D. Godoy. The title implies its character in part, but it must be read in order to appreciate its wealth of historical point, of tradition, learning and general interest. There is a minor story woven in and around the characters, events and details of our Lord's life, as given in Scripture, but so reverently and skilfully is the subject treated, that it associates the liveliness of a story, with the more solid qualities of a decidedly original running Biblical commentary and expositor. The incidents of the Redeemer's stay on earth certainly lose nothing of their holiness, grandeur or gravity in these pages, while to many the additional light the form of the story with its deep and exhaustive research throws upon the subject, may make it permanently entertaining and elevating. It is not a Sunday-School tale by any means, but an historical novel in the fullest sense of the word, with romance as a vehicle, of a series of beautiful pictures, events, facts and lessons, good both for head and heart. Published by William Gottsberger, New York, and for sale by Porter & Coates.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

The English Illustrated Magazine for January is fully up to the excellent standard of this monthly in its reading, and is unusually rich in pictorial illustrations. The place of honor in this respect must be given Julia Cartwright's fascinating paper entitled "Undine," in which is traced the creation of Fouque's nymphean heroine in his immortal romance, accompanied by nine romantic pictures. The author of "John Halifax, Gentleman," contributes the first of a series of papers on Ireland, as "An Unknown Country." An interesting paper on "The Daughters of George III" presents full-page portraits of the six beautiful princesses. The two serials—"Jacquetta," by the author of "John Herring," and "A Secret Inheritance," by Farjeon, have generous instalments. Macmillan & Co., New York.

The frontispiece of the January *Wide Awake*, "The Pigeon-Tower of Grandval," will at once attract readers to the very interesting article by the artist, Henry Bacon, entitled "The Doves of the French Revolution," a most quaint contribution to historical knowledge. The number opens with a charming story of some length by Sarah Orne Jewett, entitled "The Christmas Guest." A notable feature is the second paper of "the Longfellow literature" promised for this year—"An Old House," which describes the old Longfellow home in Portland, and is fully illustrated by drawings and photographs. Mrs. Jessie Benton Fremont, in "Taffy and Buster, II," describes an entertainment by children to raise money for the care of wounded soldiers in the time of the Civil War. The many other articles comprise stories, sketches on a variety of interesting subjects, good poems, etc., by favorite writers. The number is brilliant in pictorial illustrations. D. Lothrop & Co., Boston.

In the *Century* for January, Messrs. Nicolay and Hay, in their "Life of Abraham Lincoln," deal with his residence in Springfield as a lawyer, his marriage, the Shields duel and the campaign of 1844. Mr George W. Cable furnishes the first part of a new story, entitled, "Caranco;" and "The Hundredth Man," by Frank R. Stockton, begins to foreshadow some of those amusing and wildly absurd complications in the imagining and unravelling of which the author is such a master. As a piece of character drawing nothing could be more faithful to nature and yet more grotesque than the "Wimpy Adoptions," by Richard Malcolm Johnston, who has given us so many genre pictures of humble life in Georgia. Henry James has a very keen and critical analysis of the genius of Coquelin, the French actor, and William C. Brownell writes very entertainingly of three French sculptors, Saint Marceaux, Merci and Falguiere. In the war department of the number General Henry J. Hunt, Chief of Artillery of the Army of the Potomac, writes of "The Third Day at Gettysburg," and General E. P. Alexander describes "Pickett's Charge and Artillery Fighting at Gettysburg." The Century Company, New York.

EIGHT thousand dollars was found in an old apron of a venerable woman who died at Port Pleasant, N. J., lately.

War Ahead.

There is great danger of war with Mexico in the near future, but at present we can pursue the arts of happiness, prosperity and wealth. Wherever you live, you should write to Hallett & Co., Portland, Maine, and receive free, full information about work that you can do, and live at home, earning thereby from $5 to $25 and upwards daily. Some have earned over $50 in a day. Capital not required; you are started free. All is new; both sexes. All ages. Pay, as above guaranteed, from first start.

OF THE PUBLIC LAND.

As we all know, the public land of the United States is divided into land districts. The land is surveyed and plats of the separate townships are made at the General Land Office, Washington, and sent to the land office of the particular district in which the land may be. At this office is a "Register," who records the filings made by the settlers, and keeps track of the disposal of the different land.

The "Receiver" takes charge of no moneys paid for public lands, and is the authority to whom proof of settlement and compliance with the land laws is made to secure a deed from the Government, technically called "proving up." He also passes judgment on contests made for non-compliance with the requirements of the land laws. In a district of purely agricultural land, there are three ways in which to secure a home: By taking a homestead," pre-emption" or "tree claim,"—160 acres is the maximum amount that can be "filed" on in each case. A tree claim and homestead, or a pre-emption and tree claim, can be taken at the same time, but a pre-emption cannot be taken before a homestead is "proved up," or vice versa. The pre-emption and homestead require residence to secure title. Eight years is given in which to raise ten acres of trees on a 160 acre tree claim, when a deed will be given. Thus it will be seen that ultimately 480 acres of the public domain can be secured under the operation of these laws.

Having stated the theoretical rights of our citizens under the present laws, we will show the way to apply them in practice.

Thus, if a person, tired of struggling for existence on the worn and high priced lands of the East, determines to go West and "grow up" with the country, the first thing to do on arrival will be to go to the land office and get plats of townships showing the quarter sections taken, or still eligible for entry.

These will cost $1 each. With these he can proceed to the locality they designate, and by the aid of the figures on the section stakes, which he can easily learn to read, can make his selection.

The settler is already on the ground are very anxious to have neighbors, and will often gratuitously assist in "locating" the intending home seeker. The selection made, the land office is again visited, where the Register will supply official blanks, on which the immigrant will fill out a description of the town, range, section and quarter where his selection may be, and make affidavit of his intention to settle on the same.

These are filed with the Register, and the sum of $18.00 is paid, if the applicant decides to make it a "homestead," after which, at the expiration of five years, the Government will give a deed, without further expense, other than $8 when "final proof" is made. If a pre-emption, at "proving up," $1.25 per acre will be charged additional.

In making entry of a "tree claim," $14 will be paid when "filing" is made, and a like sum at the date of final proof.

Bearing these facts in mind, there is no necessity of requiring the services of "land agents" or "locators," and other expenses than those named, are not necessary. The methods of procedure, both in finding unentered lands, and in "filing" on them, is very simple, and with a copy of the land laws, and the plats to be had at the land office, the settler can easily make his own selections.

HE WENT UP.—A jury in Arkansaw, composed of eleven business-men and an old fellow from across the creek, retired to the jury-room. The foreman, when selected, remarked that he thought that the prisoner ought to be sent to the penitentiary for five years. "That ain't long enough," said the old fellow. "Let's put it on him for ten." "Oh, no, that won't do!" "Wall, then"—stretching himself out on a bench—"I'm with yer." "What! You're going to hang the jury?" "That's about it." "My dear sir, we are anxious to get back to our business." "Then send him up for ten." "But that would be a great injustice." "Then squat an' make yourselves comfortable." "Have you any special reason why the prisoner should go up for ten years?" "Thing I have"—throwing a quid of tobacco at the spittoon. "Will you please name it?" "Yes, for it won't take me long. He is my son-in-law, an' I have been supportin' him ever since he was married." He went up for ten years.

A NEW departure is being taken in Paris in the manner of supplying food to the public. The Municipal Council of that city has taken up a proposition to set up popular restaurants, with a specially low tariff, to be placed under administrative direction. These restaurants, which are intended for the working classes, would be enabled to supply good and wholesome food on extremely advantageous terms. It has been proposed to establish one of them in the basement of one of the market buildings. But objections have been raised from two quarters—in the first place from the traders and next from the police—on the ground that thieves and criminals would be attracted to the locality, where owing to the nature of the building, surveillance, already very difficult, would become almost impossible, and where, therefore, larcenies might be freely committed. But the benefits anticipated from the new restaurants are very considerable, and it seems to be probable that, even if the objection to the present proposal is held good, the Council will decide upon establishing the restaurants elsewhere.

26,587,335

BOTTLES OF

Warner's SAFE Cure

SOLD, TO DEC. 27, 1886.

No Other Remedy in the World Can Produce Such a Record.

The wanderful success of "Warner's SAFE Cure" is due wholly to the real merit of the remedy. For a long time it has been *REGARDED BY THE HIGHEST MEDICAL AUTHORITIES AS THE ONLY SPECIFIC FOR KIDNEY, LIVER AND URINARY DISEASES AND FEMALE COMPLAINTS.*

Thousands of people owe their life and health to "Warner's SAFE Cure," and we can produce *100,000 TESTIMONIALS* to that effect.

Read the following and note the large number of bottles distributed. We guarantee these figures to be correct, as our sales-books will prove.

BOSTON, - - - - 1,149,122.

EDWIN HENDERSON (1306 Arch St., Philadelphia, Pa.), had five different doctors for *enlargement of the prostate gland;* three said he could *not be cured.* After having given himself up he began the use of Warner's SAFE Cure, and nine bottles *cured him.*

PROVIDENCE, - - - 171,929.

H. D. THAYER (563 Lexington St., Baltimore, Md.), afflicted with *Liver disease,* which covered his *face with blotches.* Having tried every remedy of physicians in vain, began the use of Warner's SAFE Cure. "I have *no more symptoms* of *Liver troubles, nor any blotches.*"

PORTLAND, ME., - - 441,105.

EX-SENATOR B. K. BRUCE (South Carolina), after doctoring for years for what he supposed was *Malaria,* discovered he was afflicted with *Sugar Diabetes,* and having obtained no relief whatever from his physicians, he began the use of Warner's SAFE *Diabetes* Cure, and he says: "My friends are astonished at my improvement."

BAL. OF NEW ENG., - 441,753.

LIZZIE S. BRUNNER (New Texas, Pa.), was for *three years an invalid;* confined to her bed for nine months. Under the treatment of four different physicians, for various diseases. Every organ in her body was *apparently diseased.* She finally discovered that she was suffering from *congestion of the Liver,* as the prime cause, and after using sixty-four bottles of Warner's SAFE *Nervine* and SAFE *Pills,* she writes, "To-day *I enjoy good health.*"

NEW YORK STATE, - 3,870,773.

PENNSYLVANIA, - - 1,821,218.

REV. LOUIS HEIMMILLER (Binghamton, N. Y.), said his wife was in a precarious condition from *constitutional female disorder,* but after using a few bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure, she was restored to *"perfect health."*

CHICAGO, - - - 2,808,693.

JOHN M. RUNBAUGH (Delmont, Pa.), after having been ill more or less for twenty-three years with *Chronic Diarrhœa,* contracted in the army, was fully restored to health by ten bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure.

DETROIT, - - - - 846,946.

MRS. O. BATES (Gaines, Pa.), in 1885 was afflicted with *stomach disorder,* but under the operation of Warner's SAFE Cure and "Warner's TIPPECANOE, the Best," she says, "I have been *perfectly healthy* ever since."

MILWAUKEE, - - - 458,894.

J. D. A. POHLE, M. D. (759 Michigan St., Buffalo, N. Y.), reports curing a case of *Bright's disease* by means of Warner's SAFE Cure. He prescribes it regularly.

MINNESOTA, - - - 648,017.

CAPT. GEO. B. WILTBANK (919 Spruce St., Phila., Pa.), prostrated in Central America, with Malarial Fever, caused by congestion of Kidneys and Liver. *Delirious* part of the time. *Liver enlarged* one-third. Stomach badly affected. Could *hold no food;* even water was ejected. Using less than a dozen bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure he writes, "I was *completely cured.*"

BAL. N. W. STATES, - 1,767,149.

ASK YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS ABOUT

WARNER'S SAFE CURE.

THE MOST POPULAR REMEDY EVER DISCOVERED.

CLEVELAND, - - 682,632.

MRS. (PROF.) E. J. WOLF (Gettysburg, Pa., wife of the Ed. of the Lutheran *Quarterly*), began to decline with Pulmonary Consumption. (Over 50 per cent. of all cases of Consumption are caused by diseased kidneys.) *Despaired of living.* After a thorough course of treatment with Warner's SAFE Cure, she writes, "*I am perfectly well.*"

CINCINNATI, - - 873,667.

SENATOR W. B. MILLER (Cape May, Co., N. J.) certified with pleasure to the beneficial effects upon his wife of Warner's SAFE Cure when other remedies had no result.

BAL. OHIO, (STATE.) - 633,158.

MISS Z. L. BOARDMAN (Quechee, Vt.), in May, 1882, began to *bloat,* thence came *stomach trouble,* terrible *headaches,* and finally the doctor's opinion that it was *Bright's disease* and *incurable.* Eventually she became nearly *blind,* pronounced by the doctors to be the *last stage* of Bright's disease. After having been under treatment by Warner's SAFE Cure for *one year,* she reported, "*I am as well as anyone.*"

SOUTHERN STATES, - 3,544,017.

MRS. J. T. RITCHEY (562 4th Ave., Louisville, Ky.) was a confirmed *invalid for eleven years,* just living, and hourly *expecting death.* Was confined to bed ten months each year. Was attended by the *best physicians.* Her left side was *paralyzed.* Could neither eat, sleep, nor enjoy life. The doctors said she was troubled with *female complaints;* but was satisfied her kidneys were affected. Under the operation of Warner's SAFE Cure she passed a *large stone* or calculus, and in Nov. 1885, reported, "Am to-day *as well as when a girl.*"

CANADA, - - 1,467,824.

ST. LOUIS, - - 1,530,527.

W. B. BARGY (Rochester, N. Y.), in 1883 had a 7 year old daughter who complained of *blindness.* She then *wasted* away to a *skeleton;* a hard *swelling* appeared upon her left side which nearly equaled her head in size. The doctors gave all sorts of causes, but she kept growing *worse.* Upon the advice of Prof. Latimore, State Chemist, he says, "we began to use Warner's SAFE Cure, and to-day she is one of the *healthiest* and most *vigorous of children.*"

KANSAS CITY, - - 717,860.

E. D. CROSSMAN, (Brocton, N. Y.) was a victim of annoying *bladder disorder.* He consulted a number of first-class physicians *without benefit.* He says, "I would gladly have paid any physician $100 could he have done what a few bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure did for me. I continued its use until I am *thoroughly cured* and am to-day *perfectly free* from all urinary troubles."

BAL. S. W. STATES, - - 746,789.

THOS. BEMISH (75 Hampshire St., Buffalo, N. Y.), in 1881 contracted *a cold* which settled in his *kidneys,* and laid him up for some time. After using five bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure, however, he says, "I have *never had a return of the complaint* and am to-day *strong and well.*"

SAN FRANCISCO, - - 1,242,946.

CAPT. W. D. ROBINSON (U. S. Marine Insp., Buffalo, N. Y.), in 1885 was suffering with a *skin humor like leprosy.* Could not sleep; was in great *agony.* For two years tried everything, without benefit. Was pronounced *incurable.* "Twenty bottles of Warner's SAFE Cure *completely cured me,* and to-day I am strong and well." (Feb. 5, 1885.)

BAL. PACIFIC COAST, - 732,316.

☞ **Every Testimonial we publish is genuine. Write to the testators, enclosing stamp for reply, and learn for yourselves.**

Humorous.

TO MEMORY DEAR.

Forget you? Never! E'en though time
Should strangely change my earthly lot;
Though friends should cease on you to smile
And hatred seek your name to blot.

Though each successive year of age
Should with a furrow leave its trace,
Believe me, you I'd ne'er forget,
Despite the wrinkles on your face.

Forget you? Though the stars should fade,
The sun refuse his light to give,
Though earth should from its orbit spring,
In memory you still would live.

Forget you? Not while I receive
Each month your heartless note, to wit:
"To Pressly Fittem, Suit of Clothes,
$100. Please remit."

—U. N. None.

Good life-preserver—Food.

A bad habit—An ill-fitting riding-dress.

The latest wrinkle—That in the tails of your overcoat.

A promising writer—The giver of a promissory note.

What is better than a greenback fiver?—An Italian tenor.

Why is Hanlan like a well-dyed cloth?—Because he's a fast sculler.

Many a man is the architect of his own fortune, but never gets enough money to build.

A man has advertised for "A boy to open oysters with a reference." We don't believe it can be done.

Sauce for the goose may be sauce for the gander, but we prefer sauce with the former than with the latter.

Why are proof-readers an incredulous set of men?—Because they will not take anybody's word; they must have proofs.

The papers are printing a recipe to make an apple tart, but we don't think it improves an apple to make it tart.

An uptown grocer got a new pair of scales and drew large crowds to his sotre by putting out a sign reading: "Pretty girls given a weigh."

"Were you ever engaged in a duel, Colonel Blood?" "Yes, sah; I was, sah." "Did it terminate seriously?" "Yes, sah. I was arrested and fined $10, sah."

It is estimated that the people of America consume three thousand barrels of pills a year, and yet there is occasionally a man left to reach his end by a railroad collision.

Nervous old lady, on fifth floor of hotel: "Do you know what precautions the proprietor of the hotel has taken against fire?" Porter: "Yis, mum; he has the place inshoored for twice wot it's worth."

There is nothing like good advertising. An undertaker has struck out an original line in announcing his funerals in the following terms: "Why live and be miserable when you can be buried comfortably for $25."

"How did your husband like the new play?" "Oh, he could't see much of it." "That's too bad. He should have taken his glasses." "Oh, he did. He went out after each act. That's the reason he didn't see more of the play."

"Are you familiar with the analysis of the spring?" he said to Mrs. Parvenu at Saratoga. "Well," she made answer, "I can't say as I am, but I'm sure there was more analysis in the water to-day than usual, for mine tasted awful!"

Tommy, who has just received a severe scolding: "Am I really so naughty, mamma?" Mamma: "Yes, Tommy, you are a very bad boy." Tommy, reflectively: "Well, anyhow, mamma, I think you ought to be glad I ain't twins!"

A rule of one of the railways provides that dogs shall not ride in passenger cars; but a big and ferocious bulldog walked into a car and appropriated a whole seat, and rode 100 miles unmolested. "He had such a meaning smile," was the conductor's apology for not ejecting him.

"Have you been doctoring this coffee, Johnny?" asked old Brown, smacking his lips in a suspicious manner. "Yes," confessed little Johnny, looking across the table at Merritt; "I heard Cora say that Mr. Merritt didn't know beans, so I put a few in the coffee pot just to test him."

"Well, doctor, what kind of a glass eye are you going to give me?" Doctor: "Oh, one of the ordinary kind that will match your other optic." High-toned patient: "Well, if it's all the same to you, doctor, I think I'd prefer a little better one than the ordinary kind. How would plate glass go?"

"Well," said the persevering governess, "I will put it in another shape. If it takes one servant nine hours to do the entire housework of a family, how long will it take three servants to do it?" Little Nell: "Oh, I can answer that! I heard mamma speak of it this very morning." Teacher: "Well, how long will it take them?" Little Nell: "Three times as long."

A married couple were out promenading in the suburbs of Austin one day. Presently the wife said: "Think, Albert, if the brigands should come now and take me from you." "Impossible, my dear." "But supposing they did come and carry me away, what would you say?" "I should say," replied the husband, "that they were new at the business. That's all."

The coachman pulls up at a railroad crossing, slights and lowers the window of the carriage. "There, sor," he says, "you can put yer head out now." "Put my head out! What do you mean?" "Why, sor, the sign beyant there by the track says, 'Look out for the locomotive.'" "Why, you fool," testily exclaimed the occupant of the carriage, "you are the party that is to do the looking out." "I am? Well, how can I do that when I'm not inside?"

THE PULSE.—In horses the pulse at rest beats forty times, in an ox from fifty to fifty-five, in sheep and pigs about seventy to eighty beats a minute. It may be felt wherever a large artery crosses a bone. It is generally examined in a horse on the cord which crosses over the bone of the lower jaw in front of its curved position, or in the bony ridge above the eye; and in cattle over the middle of the first rib, and in sheep by placing the hand on the left side, where the beating of the heart may be felt. Any material variation of the pulse from the figures given above may be considered a sign of disease. If rapid, hard and full, it is an indication of high fever or inflammation; if rapid, small and weak, low fever, loss of blood or weakness. If slow, the probabilities point to brain disease; and if irregular, to heart troubles. This is one of the principal and sure tests of the health of the animal.

ELSEWHERE in this issue we present a large advertisement of H. H. Warner & Co., setting forth the fact that up to December 27, 1886, they had sold the enormous amount of 26,587,335 bottles of "Warner's SAFE Cure" in North American alone, to say nothing of the European and Australian trade. These figures seem almost incredible, but coming as they do from a house so well-known and honorable, we feel safe in attesting to their truthfulness. "Warner's SAFE Cure" has certainly been a great boon to the suffering, and its success has depended altogether upon its own merits. For Kidney, Liver, Blood and Urinary trouble, and especially for Female Complaints, its equal was never known, and for this reason it deserves all the praise which it receives.

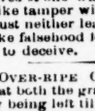
LET those who think they know, without ever having looked to see, review their supposed knowledge and cast their thoughts over again; and if, in the particulars, they find they have mistaken words and fancies for realities, and accepted the dicta of pretenders instead of the evidence of observed facts, let them correct the record and acknowledge the truth as it is in nature. Moreover, let them remember that he who propagates a delusion, and he who connives at one when already existing, both alike tamper with the truth, and that we must neither lead nor leave men to mistake falsehood for truth. Not to undeceive is to deceive.

OVER-RIPE CORN.—There is no doubt that both the grain and the straw are injured by being left till over-ripe. Many farmers fancy that the bushel is more speedily filled up with over-ripe corn; but this is seldom so, and, if it should so prove, it would certainly suffer in weight. Over-ripe wheat, for example, will have a quantity of coarse bran, whilst less ripe will have a thinner and more delicate skin, and the flour will be of a better quality. The straw, again, gets more dry and friable, and is certainly not so useful for any feeding purposes.

DAVID NICHOLSON, a convict, who had been sent to Sing Sing (N. Y.) prison for life about twenty years ago, was discharged from that institution on Tuesday. His sentence had been commuted to imprisonment for thirty years, and this he had reduced by good behavior, his record as a convict being exceptionally good. He had with him when he came out $500 from the State and $20 from the Prison Association.

A PIECE of tallow wrapped in tissue paper, and laid among furs or woolen, will prevent the ravages of moths.

HUMPHREYS'



Manual of all Diseases,
By F. HUMPHREYS, M. D.
RICHLY BOUND IN
CLOTH and GOLD
Mailed Free.

LIST OF PRINCIPAL NOS.	CURES.	PRICE.
1	Fevers, Congestion, Inflammations...	.25
2	Worms, Worm Fever, Worm Colic....	.25
3	Crying Colic, or Teething of Infants.	.25
4	Diarrhea of Children or Adults.....	.25
5	Dysentery, Griping, Bilious Colic....	.25
6	Cholera Morbus, Vomiting	.25
7	Coughs, Cold, Bronchitis.....	.25
8	Neuralgia, Toothache, Faceache....	.25
9	Headaches, Sick Headache, Vertigo..	.25

HOMEOPATHIC

10	Dyspepsia, Bilious Stomach.....	.25
11	Suppressed or Painful Periods.....	.25
12	Whites, too Profuse Periods.....	.25
13	Croup, Cough, Difficult Breathing....	.25
14	Salt Rheum, Erysipelas, Eruptions..	.25
15	Rheumatism, Rheumatic Pains.....	.25
16	Fevers and Ague, Chills, Malaria....	.50
17	Piles, Blind or Bleeding	.50
18	Catarrh, Influenza, Cold in the Head.	.50
19	Whooping Cough, Violent Coughs..	.50
20	General Debility, Physical Weakness	.50
27	Kidney Disease.....	1.00
28	Nervous Debility.....	1.00
30	Urinary Weakness, Wetting Bed.....	.50
31	Diseases of the Heart, Palpitation..	1.00

SPECIFICS.

Sold by Druggists, or sent postpaid on receipt of price.—HUMPHREYS' MEDICINE CO., 109 Fulton St. N. Y.

CATARRH TREATMENT FREE
To great sufferers, we will mail enough to convince you. B. S. LAUBENHEIMER & CO., Toledo, O.

A CASKET OF SILVERWARE FREE
To any person who will show it to their neighbors, as per our Agent and send orders. Give your nearest express and Post Office Address. Wallingford Silver Co., Wallingford, Conn.

DYER'S BEARD ELIXIR
Forces heavy Moustaches, Whiskers, or hair on bald heads in 20 to 40 days. Never fails through 7 years' constant use. 2 to 3 Pkgs. done the work. We will prove it or forfeit $500. Price per Pkg. sealed and prepaid, $1.00. DYER MFG. CO., PALATINE, ILL.

50 CHROMO or 25 All Hidden Name CARDS, 10c. Sample Book 4c. Crown Pig. Co., Northford, Ct

SECRET OF BEAUTY

BLOOM OF YOUTH

WHITE LILAC SOAP

Every Lady desires to be considered handsome. The most important adjunct to perfect beauty is a clear, smooth, soft and beautiful skin. Ladies afflicted with Tan, Freckles, Rough or Discolored Skin and other Blemishes, should lose no time in applying this old established and delightful Toilet preparation.

It will immediately obliterate all such imperfections and is perfectly harmless.

It has been chemically analysed by the Board of Health of New York City, and pronounced entirely free from any material injurious to the health or skin.

Price, 75 Cents Per Bottle.

Sold by Druggists and Fancy Goods Dealers Everywhere.

Depot 39 Barclay St., N. Y.

The new and exquisite Toilet Soap which for perfect Purity and Permanency of Delicate fragrance is unequalled for either Toilet or Nursery use. No materials unless carefully selected and absolutely pure ever enter into its manufacture, hence this Soap is perfectly reliable for use in the Nursery and unrivalled for general Toilet use.

LAIRD'S WHITE LILAC TOILET SOAP is *refreshing* and *soothing* to the skin, leaving it beautifully *clear soft* and *smooth*.

Price, 20c. per Cake. Box 3 Cakes 50c.

Sent by Mail upon Receipt of Price.

Sold by Druggists and Fancy Goods Dealers Everywhere.

TO PLAY MUSIC WITHOUT STUDY!

This Can Be Done by Means of the

INSTANTANEOUS GUIDE to the PIANO or ORGAN.

Anyone knowing a tune, either "in the head," as it is called," or able to hum, whistle or sing, can play it WITHOUT ANY PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF MUSIC OR THE INSTRUMENTS. In fact it may be the first time they have ever seen a piano or organ, yet if they know so much as to whistle or hum a tune—say "Way Down on the Swanee River," for instance—they can play it IMMEDIATELY, correctly and with good effect, on the piano or organ, with the assistance of this GUIDE. THE GUIDE shows how the tunes are to be played with both hands and in different keys. Thus the player has the full effect of the bass and treble clefs, together with the power of making correct and harmonious chords in accompaniments. It must be plainly understood that the Guide will not make an accomplished musician without study. It will do nothing of the kind. What it can do, do well and WITHOUT FAIL is to enable anyone understanding the nature of a tune or air in music to play such tunes or airs, without ever having opened a music book, and without previously needing to know the difference between A or G, a half-note or a quarter-note, a sharp or a flat. The Guide is placed on the instrument, and the player, without reference to anything but what he is shown by it to do, can in a few moments play the piece accurately and without the least trouble. Although it does not and never can supplant regular books of study, it will be of incalculable assistance to the player by "ear" and all others who are their own instructors. By giving the student the power to play IMMEDIATELY twelve tunes of different character—this number of pieces being sent with each Guide—the ear grows accustomed to the sounds, and the fingers used to the position and touch of the keys. So, after a very little practice with the Guide, it will be easy to pick out, almost with the skill and rapidity of the trained player, any air or tune that may be heard or known.

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Latest Fashion Phases.

Plush, either black or dark brown, has been a mantle material par excellence for the winter, and smart short mantles, trimmed with jet and fur, are more fashionable than the long ones.

The long mantles and cloaks are of fancy woolen materials, trimmed with plush or fur. The short ones are more useful on the whole, as they serve as afternoon and evening entertainment wraps, as well as for day wear and for weddings.

Some are profusely embroidered in jet or gold. Black fox and skunk seem to be the popular furs, but a new shade of silver or blue fox, with a mauve tint, and a soft, feathery appearance is making its way, both as boas (very becoming to the complexion) and as mantle trimming. Round sable boas of considerable length are also now much worn.

Clusters of fur balls are made up for putting in hats or bonnets, and can be had in chinchilla and light and dark brown fur, to match that on the mantle.

Some of the jaunty-looking hats of black plush have the brims of black Astrakan, with a cluster of small Astrakan balls in front, intermixed with bows of gray plush ribbon or red wings.

Notwithstanding the great opposition, birds' wings are most freely and profusely used, especially white ones, as many as eight being frequently arranged among velvet and plush folds, placed upright, but inclining slightly towards the front.

The natural-sized wing is divided into two or three sections, and put close together and behind each other. Most of them are white duck wings.

Bands of duck and pheasant feathers are arranged up the sides of some bonnets, especially the flat-crowned, plush-covered ones, cut up high at the back. A smart high bow of harmonizing ribbon is placed quite in the front.

Black plush is much used for bonnets, and the puffed crowns are very popular, especially when pushed upward towards the front.

Possessors of gauze fans are renovating them by arranging delicate lace of about 3 inches as a cascade along the top, carrying it down the outer stick, if possible, and finishing off with two bows of ribbon, placed at the top and at the base of the side cascade. The lace and bow end where the mounts begin.

In black and white this is equally done, and sometimes the lace is a fancy tinsel one, and if anything very chic is desired, diamond ornaments are added on to the loops. Many a well-worn fan may be successfully renovated for a winter campaign in this way.

Gauze and crepe de Chine fans are still the most popular, and some new ones of painted silk, with fairy-like gauze stretched over them, in the style of the photograph frames of last season, are novel.

Pale pink fans, with pale pink coral imitation mounts (stained ivory) are to be fashionable for young girls. One favorite design for a black gauze fan is a large spider's web in silver, with flies of varied kind and size and colored tinsel paints entangled in it. Another is a flight of sprites in pale shades of silver and neutral tints, the foremost one carrying a lighted lantern, from which emanate golden and red rays.

For day wear, amethysts are being worn on dark gowns, and silken pocket-handkerchiefs of the same shade as the mauve glints or lights of the stone, are pushed into the front of the bodice, to form a crumpled-looking waistcoat.

Carbuncles are also popular, and handkerchiefs corresponding in the same manner as the above.

Buttons in the form of jockey caps, with the crowns of mother o'pearl, and the peaks in gold, are to be seen in two sizes. Fancy buttons of all kinds appear to be as popular as last season.

Clear amber beads, cut in facets and mounted on gold hairpins, and as combs, are novel. For bridesmaids' presents and really good souvenirs, the moonstone set with small brilliants is one of the fashions of the day.

The facsimile of the signature of a friend, is now reduced to a suitable size, and engraved across a band ring or bangle, and sometimes carried out in very small diamonds.

For an engagement ring this is often done. It is carrying out in the jeweller's art what has been so popular in fancy work during the past season. I allude to the enlarged signatures traced on the backs of blotters and albums, also across the corners of rugs and quilts, and worked in raised silks.

Two guarded pins in gold, with initial letter of the Christian name on one and that of the surname on the other, in pearls, are worn to one side of the dress collar, placed one above the other.

Pleated colored satin is a good deal worn in dress bodices instead of linen collars and cuffs. Sets are shown in various colors. Only a small piece is shown, and the pleating is very close.

A plain length of satin is sometimes seen above a not very high white linen collar, finished off in a dainty little bow in front, peeping out from between the turned-back corners.

Colored satin, ending in a bow, is also put into evening sleeves of bodices, instead of any friller or tucker. A bright color in a black dress enlivens it considerably.

It is quite the exception now to see anything worn around the throat in the evening. Sometimes a string of pearls or a jewelled necklet, but, as a rule, the neck is left unadorned.

Smart velvet bows are occasionally worn in the hair; or a spray of real maiden-hair, secured by a diamond fly, beetle or butterfly.

The fashionable flower of the day is at present the white chrysanthemum. It is worn as a buttonhole, massed as a bouquet, and nestled among moss for table decoration, lightly veiled with maiden-hair fern. Tinted ivy leaves very often form a background for it.

Suggestions for evening dresses have been borrowed from the petals of flowers, all the colors of which are blended by means of ample ruchings of faille, which are laid one into the other like the leaves of a composite flower, and placed upon the edge of the skirt.

On a dress known as the "oeillet panache," all the varied tones of maize and crimson which are discernible in a shaded carnation are united in this manner. The long tunic of black lace used for the drapery is similarly ruched with tulle, and is held down on one side by numerous rows of close gatherers, while an ample sash of moire is seen at the other. The crimson velvet bodice of this dress is close-fitting and finished with black lace.

A buttercup dress has two tunics—one of yellow satin, draped over black velvet; and the second one, of striped tulle, opens at one side, and is bordered all around with a thick ruching.

All the blues and pinks of a forget-me-not flower are to be found in Pompadour Merveilleux, of which the underskirt is treated in like manner. The tunic of this dress, which is of pink crepe embroidery, is almost hidden by the long falling cascades of narrow blue ribbon which descend in lines from the waist to the feet.

For ordinary wear tailor-made coats are very popular. They may be of any thick wool cloth, fancy or plain, and are made either single or double-breasted, the skirt long enough to conceal the basque worn beneath it.

These coats may be plain, or with collars and cuffs of fur, and should always be worn over a tailor-gown.

Short wraps are of seal, seal-plush, fancy plush or velvet, trimmed with fur or beaded gimp and fringes. The new seal mantles fit closely at the back and have square or pointed fronts and flowing sleeves. They are trimmed with tail fringes, or ball fringe of fur.

Fancy plush wraps are very elaborate, many of them showing figures—not in the older brocade fashion—but partially in uncut velvet or plush, in different shades of brown, the rich material nearly covered with richer ornaments and fringes of gimp and cord and small bronze beads.

New face-veils are of tulle, dotted with chenille.

Soft vests of colored surah will be greatly worn. They are gathered at the neck, fall a little below the waist-line in a doubled frill or puff, and are fastened with a clasp at the waist, or with a short belt and bow of ribbon.

Ruches are more popular for neckwear than ever.

Linen collars are straight and high, or with small turned-down points in front. Cuffs are plain, and show only half an inch below the sleeve.

Elaborate embroidery is not so much in vogue as simpler stitches—feather or brier-work, or polka-dots on collars, cuffs and vests of house dresses, or above the hems of children's skirts. Like braiding, silk embroidery is done in irregular figures, or in oft-repeated, simple designs to give an "all-over" effect.

Odds and Ends.

HINTS ON CLEANING, ETC.

In cleaning dresses of other articles of fine woolen and cotton materials especially those which have patterns in various colors, several precautions are necessary to prevent the colors from running into each other or fading.

A fine bright day should be chosen for washing them, and no other articles should be washed at the same time. Colored materials should never be put into boiling water, nor should soda or any kind of washing powder be used.

A good lather of soap is prepared with tepid water and the material is well washed in this; no soap must be rubbed on it, nor must the material be subjected to hard rubbing or left in the water a long time.

As soon as the dirt is washed out the material is wrung, but not too hard, and put into a pail of water with which a spoonful of oxgall has been mixed.

After rinsing it well in this put it into clean cold water into which a large spoonful of vinegar has been added, rinse it in this, then rinse it again in fresh water and vinegar, wring it out, and hang it up to dry, in the shade out of doors, or in the house. The whole of the washing should be done as quickly as possible, and the material must never be allowed to remain soaking in the water.

Iron it before it is dry; colored materials invariably lose their colors if they are allowed to remain damp for long. If the ironing cannot be done the same day, let the material dry thoroughly, and sprinkle it with water a quarter of an hour before ironing it.

The irons must not be very hot; many colors fade under a hot iron, others change color entirely; pink, for instance, becomes dull crimson under a hot iron, and light green is converted into what looks like a dirty shade of blue. Prolonged damp and heat are, therefore, the two things to be guarded against in cleaning or washing plain and printed voile, mousseline de laine, cambric, muslin, lawn, etc.

Ribbons, before being cleaned, must be unpicked, made into bows, all loose threads must be removed, and the pieces smoothed out on the table. Then dissolve about a third of an ounce of the whitest and purest gum arabic in a tumbler full of water, damp the ribbon slightly, but evenly, on the wrong side with this solution, using a small soft sponge for the purpose, and iron at once with a moderately hot iron. The iron must be just hot enough to dry the ribbon, if too hot it will spoil the colors.

The soiled velvet collars of coats and jackets may be washed with soap and water, or rubbed with a little petroleum oil; and the circular mark left by the evaporation of the oil may be dusted while still damp with a little powdered whitening, which is allowed to dry on, to be brushed off afterwards.

The stains caused by certain fruits, such as mulberries, black currants, black cherries, etc., and wine stains, are best removed by washing the articles in a strong soap lather, in the first place, then fumigating them in sulphuric acid. But as this is likely to spoil the colors, only articles that are white, or known to be thoroughly well dyed, should be subjected to the fumigation.

Furs are cleaned in different ways, depending on the nature of the fur, its color, depth, etc. Ermine gray squirrel, and all light colored and white furs are best cleaned with a piece of soft, fine flannel dipped in flour; this is well rubbed into the fur backwards and forwards, care being taken that the flour penetrates to the skin. When the fur begins to look clean, shake it well and rub again with a clean piece of flannel until all the flour is shaken and rubbed out. By cleaning in this way, the color of the fur is entirely restored without the necessity of unpicking any part of the article that is cleaned.

Sable, chinchilla, skunk, beaver, and all dark furs, are cleaned with fresh bran heated in a saucepan over the fire. The saucepan must be scrupulously clean, and the bran must be stirred while on the fire or it will burn. The hot bran is well rubbed into the fur for some time, and is then shaken and rubbed out again. If the fur is very dirty it should be unpicked and laid out on a board for cleaning.

Light-colored and white furs may also be cleaned with a thin paste made of whitening and water. This is well rubbed into the fur with the hands until every part is coated with the paste. The fur is then hung up to dry, and may be left until the next day, when the whitening must be brushed and beaten out of it. This will take some little time to do.

Grease stains on black materials may be removed by covering the spots with a layer of powdered talc or French chalk, if there happens to be any reason why the material should not be damped. If no such reason exists, spirits of turpentine may be used, and a few drops of essence of lemon added to the turpentine will neutralize the smell of the spirits.

Venison is the most readily digested of animal food; its age makes it fibrinous, its texture is naturally not so close-grained as that of beef and mutton, and the period during which it is hung gives it additional tenderness. Next to venison probably follows grouse, in the weather which allows the bird to be kept sufficiently long.

THERE is at present great distress among the Roman population, and cases occur almost daily of persons fainting and even dying from starvation in the streets. The Society of St. Peter has, in consequence, opened cheap kitchens in different quarters of the city, where the poorest are fed gratuitously, and where those somewhat better off can obtain wholesome food at a trifling cost.

How can we expect that a friend should keep our secret whilst we are convincing him that it is more than we can do ourselves.

NOTHING is so credulous as vanity.

Confidential Correspondents.

A. R.—No lady smokes or behaves in the vulgar way you speak of.

ROB.—The first three week days—Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday—are supposed to be preferable to the other three—Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. The old rhyme, that is said to have been once familiar to nearly all engaged persons, embodies this belief.

MABEL H.—If he is a high-spirited young fellow who has only once or twice fallen into wrong courses, you may do something with him; but, if he is confirmed, you will only ruin yourself by having anything to do with him. He can never do you any good. Better be dead than be a drunkard's wife.

HESTER.—It is quite impossible to stain hog's lard, or any other grease, black with walnut-shells, or any extract from them. The staining action is exerted only on skin, hair, feathers, and bodies of a similar nature. To make a black pomatum you must mix in lamp-black or ivory-black.

SARAH.—You might ask him to drive home with you some day, when he is accompanying you from church. And if you really care for him, it would be well for you to take your mother into your confidence, and leave her to make him so much at home in your presence that his bashfulness will gradually be overcome.

ANXIOUS.—A poor complexion, with coarseness and roughness of skin, is not a thing which can be washed away with any cosmetic. It is occasioned by a bad state of the blood, or by some internal ailment, and must be overcome by removing the cause. Carefulness of diet and plenty of outdoor exercise are among the best restoratives.

COLUMN.—Lime-water is sometimes added to milk to prevent it from turning sour, and sometimes, with people of weak digestion, to render it more readily digestible, and prevent its rejection by the stomach. 2. It does not matter one straw whether you wear knitted or woven garments next to the skin or anywhere else. Wear what is most comfortable.

FOREIGNER.—When we reflect on the way in which young men go to Germany to study, and the way in which our young ladies spend their time over the German language, and German music, and the way in which German science, German literature, and German military tactics are admired, we cannot imagine why you should resent an allusion to your German parentage.

K. E.—Your case is common enough, and we very much question whether one match in ten thousand turns out to be greatly different. Men and girls do not seem to see what an awful step marriage is until the time for repentance and wisdom has gone by. You must make the best you can of your lot. You have married a man who has no great qualities of mind or heart. Thank Heaven daily that he is not immoral or brutish. You were a girl when you chose a commonplace person. Very good: it is a pity; but you must stand by your bargain, and perhaps some lucky chance may cause your dullard to develop into a brave and completely energetic man.

JANE L.—You say your uncle, in reading a story in an old journal, bit upon a part in which the ages of an old lady and her granddaughter were in dispute; that one person said the grandmother was six times older than the granddaughter, and that in speaking of the old lady it was said—

> "of to her age there added be
> One half, one third, and thrice times three,
> Six score and ten the sum will be.
> What is her age? Pray tell it me?"

and that neither of you can make out the puzzle. It is a very old old arithmetical problem, and not a difficult one. Its being put in rhyme makes it seem harder than it really is. The lady was sixty-six years old, as you can readily prove. By adding one half of her age (33 years) and one-third of her age (22 years) and three times three (9 years) to her age (66 years), the sum of the whole will be one hundred and thirty years, or "six score and ten," as it is styled in the rhyme. And as she was six times as old as her granddaughter, the latter was of course eleven years of age.

FLO.—You should learn the difference between the parts of the verbs lie and lay, and commit them to memory. Lie is an intransitive verb; its past tense is lay, its perfect participle is lain, and its present participle, lying. Lay is a transitive verb; its past tense is laid, its perfect participle is also laid, and its present participle, laying. With reference to a person's reclining, one would say: He told John to lie down, and he lay down. But in reference to acting upon, or doing something to an object, the correct form would be: He told John to lay down the knife and he laid it down. The cattle were lying under the trees; the men were laying boards upon the lumber pile; the old log had lain a long time in the road; the men had laid a great many logs on the wood-pile, etc., are contrasted examples of the proper way to use the different forms of the two verbs. It is never proper to use the word laid in speaking of one's lying down, or reclining. Always say, I lay down, we lay down, they lay down, etc.; never I laid down, they laid down, etc. Never say he was laying down when you mean that he was lying on the bed, or reclining upon anything.

O. R. W.—The manufacture of imitation gems is a very ancient art. The Egyptians excelled in it thousands of years ago. In fact, no modern nation has been able to equal them in some phases of the business, especially in the manufacture of precious stones of enormous size. The great value of diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and other gems, has stimulated the greed of men in all ages to make them by artificial processes. At the present time their manufacture is carried on in America and Europe to an unprecedented extent, and with remarkable skill; in England the products of this skill are beginning to be sold openly as manufactured gems, without any pretence that they are genuine. As your friend informed you, this imitation jewelry is beginning to be much worn by persons of moderate means, who cannot afford to pay for the genuine kind, and who do not pretend that the jewelry they wear is genuine. People who choose to do this of course have the right to do it. If the young lady to whom you refer is one of this kind, and if she would rather have you give her a set of imitation jewelry than none at all, there would be no impropriety in your making her such a present. But it would be inexcusable for you to give such a set of jewelry and leave her to suppose that the gems were genuine. That would be both ungentlemanly and dishonest, and an insult to the young lady besides.